

THE  
BAPTIST

SHORT METHOD,

WITH

INQUIRERS AND OPPONENTS.



BY  
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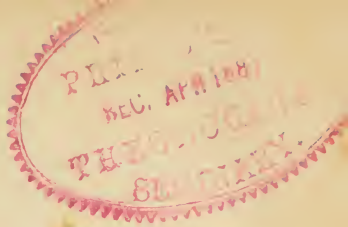
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## P R E F A C E .

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**T**HE object of this work is to give a clear, condensed, but comprehensive view of those points of difference which distinguish Baptists from other denominations; and to furnish the best arguments, in the fewest words, and in the most lucid style, for those who wish to know, and those who wish to defend our views.

Much has been written on the various subjects here treated. But there is no single book that embraces them all, and can show at a glance, what Baptists are, and what they believe.

The special aim has been to present the subjects in the strongest light; and to use,



not *all*, but the *best* arguments, and in the most effective form, for the defence of the truth.

It will furnish a *resumé* of arguments and authorities, quite sufficient for all ordinary occasions of explanation or disputation—either to answer inquiry, or to meet opposition—in private or public.

No little stress is laid on the orderly arrangement, the clearness of statement, and the directness of proof, that mark the work. Any question discussed can be found in a moment, and the presentation of the case will be instantly understood.

It should be added, that no Baptist authorities have been adduced in evidence. This omission is not because Baptist scholarship is not as able, or Baptist authority as weighty, as any other. But to many minds the concessions of opponents seem more than the opinions of friends. And usually, we prefer to call as witnesses those who





differ from us, where they bear testimony to the truth.

Candor requires us also to say—what no one certainly is ignorant of—that Pedobaptist scholars and divines here cited, notwithstanding their admissions in our favor, still practice sprinkling, and defend infant baptism. How they can do it, is not for us to say. We prefer to use their admissions in the cause of truth, rather than to attempt an explanation of their inconsistencies, or undertake to show how good and learned men can habitually contradict their judgment and scholarship by their practices.

In the hope that these pages may serve the cause of gospel truth, and a pure order in church life, they are committed to the candid judgment and the kind regard of those for whom they were prepared.

E. T. H.

BROOKLYN, N. Y.


*August 18th, 1868.*



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# THE BAPTIST SHORT METHOD:

WITH

## INQUIRERS AND OPPONENTS.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### BAPTIST PROPOSITIONS.

**T**HE Bible is our only guide, source of knowledge, and standard of authority in matters of religion. Whatever is taught in the Scriptures is to be believed; whatever is there enjoined, is to be obeyed. And what is there neither enjoined nor taught, is not to be imposed on the faith or conscience of any man as of religious obligation.

2. The right of private judgment in the interpretation of the Scriptures. Every man



has the right to read and explain the Bible for himself, being responsible to God alone for the correct interpretation of the sacred word.

3. Freedom of conscience. Every one has the right to hold such religious opinions as he may believe the Bible teaches, without hindrance or dictation from any; so long as he does not intrude upon, or interfere with the rights and privileges of others by so doing.

4. Liberty of speech. All men possess the right, not only to believe, but also to profess and declare openly and without fear or harm, whatever religious opinions they may entertain, provided they are not contrary to common morality.

5. The right of worship. Every man has a right to worship God, according to the dictates of his own conscience, and the word of God, as he understands it, without hindrance or molestation; so long as he does not injure or interfere with the rights of others.

6. Civil governments, rulers, and magistrates, are to be respected, and in all temporal



matters, not contrary to conscience and the word of God, are to be obeyed. But they have no jurisdiction in spiritual concerns, and have no right of dictation, control, or interference in matters of religious faith and godliness; but are in duty bound to protect all citizens in the uninterrupted enjoyment of their religious privileges.

7. The Christian Church is independent of all human authority, and under law to Christ alone. It neither ought, nor of right can have any organic connection with the state; and for kings, princes, or priests to claim headship over it, is a usurpation of divine prerogatives and treason against God.

8. None but regenerated persons ought to be, or properly can be, members of the church of Christ, which is a spiritual body and separate from the world.

9. Pastors are not to be imposed upon churches, nor taken from them, without their consent; but are to be chosen by them without constraint, as by free men in Christ, who

have a right to the choice of their religious teachers.

10. Christ is the only lawgiver in his church. Consequently the churches cannot make laws for themselves; but only execute those which he has given. Nor can any man, or body of men legislate for the church. The New Testament alone is its statute book, by which, without change, the body of Christ is to govern itself.



## CHAPTER II.

### BAPTIST PECULIARITIES.

**I**N what respects do Baptists differ from other Christian denominations?

This is a question of no small concern. Every Baptist should be able to answer it. It is true that every honest mind, searching for truth, will rather ask, "what does the Bible teach?" than "what do men believe?" Yet the former is often the better learned, by well understanding the latter. For information, if not for authority, the opinions of men, and the creeds of churches, are important to be known. Nor should any man be willingly ignorant of the doctrinal views of his own denomination.

The following are the more important points, in which Baptists differ from others, as to religious opinion.

## 1. AS TO BAPTISM.

Baptists hold that *immersion*, dipping, or burying the candidate in water, is the only way of administering that ordinance, taught in the New Testament, or practiced by the apostles and first Christians.

Consequently the *mode* is essential to the ordinance; and nothing but dipping, or immersion, is baptism. Therefore sprinkling, pouring, or whatever else may be resorted to, are not baptism at all, but substitutes for it.

On the contrary, all Pedobaptists hold that, while immersion is valid baptism, sprinkling and pouring are valid baptism also.

## 2. THE SUBJECTS FOR BAPTISM.

Who may properly, and ought of right to be, baptized? Baptists assert that the only proper subjects for this ordinance, are those who have exercised and professed a saving faith in Christ, and are walking in godliness.

On the contrary, some hold and teach, that unregenerate persons may, and should be



baptized, as a means of grace, while all Pedobaptists claim that unconscious infants, unregenerate, or incapable of faith, should receive baptism, on the faith of their parents or sponsors. Both of which, Baptists declare to be plainly contrary to the word of God.

### 3. THE SUBJECTS FOR COMMUNION.

Who have the right, and properly should come to the communion of the Lord's Supper?

Baptists assert that those only who are regenerate, have been baptized on a profession of faith in Christ, and are living in a godly and Christian manner, as members of the church, have a right to, or can properly partake of the supper.

Of course, then, baptism is prerequisite to the communion; of course, also, the church is to judge of the qualifications of the candidate.

On the contrary, some believe and teach, that baptism is not prerequisite to the communion, and therefore unbaptized persons may rightfully come to the Lord's table.

Some also claim that each one is to be the only judge of his own fitness, and the church cannot deny the privilege to any one who requests it.

All Pedobaptists invite to the communion persons only sprinkled, whom Baptists regard as unbaptized; Catholics give to the laity the communion in one kind only, denying them the cup. All of which Baptists regard as contrary to the Scriptures, and subversive of gospel order in the churches.

#### 4. THE SUBJECTS FOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

What class and character of persons should be admitted to membership in, and constitute Christian churches?

Baptists hold that only regenerated persons, properly baptized, and living godly lives, should be admitted as members of the church of Christ. And that all others, even if within the church, should be cast out; and if without, should be denied admission.

Consequently, to receive unregenerate per-



sons to membership, whether infants or adults, destroys the spirituality of the body, and forms an unholy alliance between the church and the world, instead of maintaining a broad and distinctive difference between them.

#### 5. THE FORM OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

What form of government for the Christian church, is taught, or sanctioned, in the New Testament?

Baptists believe that each particular and separate body of believers, meeting in one place for worship, and associated in Christian covenant, as a church of Christ, is, and should of right be, entirely independent of all other persons and bodies of men; that such a church should govern itself without interference from any human authority, ecclesiastical or civil, other than its own.

Others, however, claim and teach, with great diversity of opinion, that individual bodies of Christian disciples should not govern themselves, but be governed by popes



or bishops, synods, presbyteries, or conferences, consociations, assemblies, or conventions. All of which, Baptists consider as contradictory to the word of God, and the practice of the primitive churches.

#### 6. THE OFFICERS OF A CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

What officers, according to the Scriptures, pertain to the churches?

Baptists hold that they are pastors and deacons; these two, and only these.

Here, also, they differ from many, if not most other denominations, who claim more than two orders in the ministry, and officers in the churches; running through a long catalogue, from pope to pastor, from cardinal to curate, from dean to deacon.

7. In doctrines, Baptists are what is usually known as Calvinistic, as opposed to Arminian. They hold the unity of the godhead, and the equal divinity of the Father, Son, and Spirit, the three persons composing it; a full and free salvation proclaimed to all in Christ; re-



demption and the atonement, by the meritorious sacrifice of Christ; justification by faith, not by works; the Holy Spirit the Author of regeneration and sanctification; the personal election of believers; the perseverance of the saints; the resurrection of the body; and the endless duration of rewards and punishments. Doctrinally, they agree in general with most other evangelical denominations.

There may be others, but the above mentioned are the chief points of difference between Baptists and other Christians. These are the questions on which misconception is most likely to arise, and on which information is most frequently desired. And in them all, while they do not claim to be faultless, Baptists appeal to the Bible, history, philology, and reason, to justify their views, and sustain their positions.

## CHAPTER III.

### BAPTISM.

**W**HAT is the true and proper mode of baptism, as taught in the New Testament? Baptists answer by saying, it is the dipping, immersing, or burying a candidate in water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit, on a confession of his faith in Christ.

And as proofs to sustain this proposition, they offer the following considerations.

#### THE SAVIOUR'S BAPTISM.

Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan. It is said, "And Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water."\* Again it is recorded that Jesus "was baptized

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\* Matt. iii. 16.



of John in Jordan; and straightway coming up out of the water.”\*

Now, why did Jesus go down into the water, so as to come up out of the water, unless it was to be dipped or buried in it. To say he went down into the river, to have water poured or sprinkled on him, is too trifling and absurd to have any weight with candid minds.

BP. TAYLOR says, with reference to this: “The custom of the ancient churches was not *sprinkling*, but *immersion*; in pursuance of the sense of the word in the commandment, and the example of our blessed Saviour.”†

DR. CAMPBELL, in his translation of the Gospels, says: “Jesus, being baptized, no sooner rose out of the water than heaven was open to him.”‡

OLSHAUSEN, discoursing on the baptism of Jesus, says: “The one part of the action,—the *submersion*,—represents the negative aspect,

\* Mark i. 10.

† On Matt. iii. 16.

‡ Four Gospels.

the taking away of the old man; the other,—the *immersion*,—denotes its positive aspect, the appearance of the new man.”\*

MACKNIGHT says: “Christ submitted to be baptized, that is, to be *buried* under water, and to be raised out of it again, as an emblem of his future death and resurrection.”†

LIGHTFOOT says: “That the baptism of John was the *immersion* of the body, in which manner both the ablutions of unclean persons, and the baptism of proselytes was performed, seems evident from those things which are related of it; namely, that he baptized in the Jordan, and in Enon because there was much water; and that Christ, being baptized, went up, out of the water.”‡

#### THE PLACES OF BAPTISM.

John the Baptist baptized in the Jordan, as well as in other places where an abundance of water was to be found. “And John also

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\* Com. Rom. vi. 3, 4.

† Epis. Rom. vi. 4.

‡ On Matt. iii. 6.

was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there.”\*

Why resort to places expressly because there was much water, if sprinkling or pouring were used in baptism. A very little water would have served that purpose. But much water implies, to thoughtful minds, an immersion in baptism.

CALVIN, whom Scaliger pronounced the most learned man in Europe, says: “From these words of John, (iii. 23,) it may be inferred that baptism was administered, by John and Christ, by plunging the whole body under water.”†

WHITBY says: “Because there was much water there, in which their whole bodies might be *dipped*.”‡

POOLE says: “It is apparent that both Christ and John baptized by *dipping* the body in the water, else they need not have sought places where had been a great plenty of water.”§

\* John iii. 23.

† Com. in loco.

‡ On John iii. 23.

§ Annot. on John iii. 23.

BENGEI says: "Many waters; so the rite of *immersion* required."\*

CURCELLAEUS says: "Baptism was performed by plunging the whole body into water, and not by sprinkling a few drops, as is now the practice. For John was baptizing in Enon near to Salim, because there was *much* water there."†

Of the baptism of the Eunuch by Philip, it is said: "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip."‡

Why should Philip and the Eunuch go down into the water, or indeed either of them, but for the purpose of dipping in it.

DR. TOWERSON says: "For what need would there have been of Philip and the Eunuch going *into* this (the water) were it not that

\* Com. on John iii. 23.

† Relig. Christ. Inst., cited by Booth, Ped. Ex., ch. iv. 50.

‡ Acts viii. 38.

the baptism was to be performed by *immersion*.”\*

CALVIN says: “Here we perceive how baptism was administered among the ancients; for they *immersed* the whole body in water.”†

GROTIUS says: “But that this customary rite was performed by *immersion*, and not by pouring, is indicated both by the proper signification of the word, and the places chosen for the rite.”‡

VENEMA says: “It is without controversy, that baptism in the primitive church was administered by *immersion* into water, and not by sprinkling; seeing John is said to have baptized in Jordan, and where there was *much water*, as Christ also did by his disciples in the neighborhood of those places. Philip also, going down into the water, baptized the Eunuch.”§

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\* Bap. iii. p. 56.      † Com. Acts viii. 38.

‡ Annot. Matt. iii. 6.

§ Eccl. Hist., ch. 1, sec. 138. See Booth Ped. Ex., ch. iv., sec. 76.

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 MEANING OF THE WORD.

The term "baptize" is, originally and properly speaking, a Greek word; and rightly to understand the true meaning of it, we should seek the opinions of men skilled in the Greek language. Men who are familiar with its terms ought to know. How do the dictionaries define it? what do the lexicographers and scholars say?

DONNEGAN says it means "To *immerse* repeatedly into liquid, to submerge, to soak thoroughly, to saturate."

SCHLEUSNER says: "Properly it signifies, to *dip*, to immerse, to immerse in water."

SCAPULA says: "To *dip*, to immerse, as we do any thing for the purpose of dyeing it."

PARKHURST says: "To *dip*, immerse, or plunge in water."

ALSTIDIUS says: "To baptize signifies *only* to *immerse*, not to wash except by consequence."

SCHREVELLIUS says: "To baptize, to merge, to bathe."

—♦—  
GREENFIELD says: "To *immerse*, immerge, submerge, sink."

PASSOW says: "To *immerse* often and repeatedly, to submerge."

SCHOETTGEN says: "To merge, *immerse*, to wash, to bathe."

STEVENS says: "To merge, or *immerse*, to submerge, or bury in the water."

STOURDZA says: "Literally and always it means to *plunge*. Baptism and immersion therefore are identical."

STEPHANUS says: "To *plunge* under, or overwhelm in water."

STOCKIUS says: "Properly it means to *dip*, or immerse in water."

LIDDELL and SCOTT say: "To *dip* repeatedly."

ROBINSON says: "To *immerse*, to sink."

ANTHON says: "The primary meaning of the word is to *dip*, to immerse."

GREEN says: "To *dip*, immerse, to cleanse or purify by washing."

MOSES STUART says: "Baptizo means to *dip*,

plunge, or immerse into any liquid. All lexicographers and critics of any note are agreed in this."\*

ROSENMULLER says: "To baptize is to *immerse* or dip the body, or part of the body which is to be baptized, going under the water."†

TURRETIN says: "The word baptism is of Greek origin, which signifies to baptize, to dip into, to *immerse*."‡

WILSON says: To baptize, to *dip* one into water, to plunge one into the water."§

LEIGH says: "The nature and proper signification of it is, to *dip* into water, or to plunge under water."||

VOSSIUS says: "To baptize signifies to plunge."¶

WETSTEIN says: "To baptize is to plunge,

\* Essay on Baptism, p. 51. Bib. Reposit., 1833, p. 298.

† Scolia Matt. iii. 6.

‡ Inst. loc. 19, quest. 11.

§ Chris. Dictionary.

|| Critica Sacra.

¶ Disp. Bap., dis. 1.



to *dip*. The body or part of the body being under water is said to be baptized.”\*

CAMPBELL says: “The word *baptizein*, both in sacred authors and in classical, signifies to dip, to plunge, to *immerse*; and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dyeing cloth, which was by immersion.”†

To the same effect is the testimony of many other scholars and critics, familiar with the Greek language. Candid minds, after a suitable examination, can have little question that the true meaning, indeed the only proper meaning, of *baptizo*, is to dip, plunge, immerse, or bury in water; and that baptism can only be performed by such an act.

#### SIGNIFICANT USE OF BAPTIZO.

Why did our Saviour and his apostles make use of this particular word, *baptizo*, to express or describe the ordinance which he

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\* Com. on Matt. iii. 6.

† Trans. Four Gospels. Note on Matt. iii. 11.

committed to his churches, and enjoined on all his disciples? The Greek language is rich in terms to express all positive ideas, as well as varying shades of meaning. Why was this one word alone selected for this special but important use?

*Baptizo* is found eighty times in the New Testament. In nearly seventy, it is used to designate the ordinance of baptism. Dr. Carson, Prof. Stuart, and others, have abundantly proven that this word means to dip, plunge, or immerse, and that it means nothing else. Our Saviour, in leaving a command universally binding on his disciples, meant to express it so simply, so plainly, and so positively, that none could misunderstand it. Therefore, this word was used, which means strictly and positively just what he intended and nothing else.

*Bapto* is found *three* times in the New Testament, and this also means to *dip*, but is never applied to baptism. Why not? Because it has other meanings also, as well as to dip;

and with this word the ordinance might easily have been misunderstood.

*Louo* is found *six* times, and means to wash; to wash the whole body; to bathe. If, as some say, baptism means to wash, here was just the word to express it. But this word is never applied to the ordinance; because washing was not meant.

*Nipto* means, in like manner, to wash, but to wash the extremities, as the face, hands, or feet, as distinguished from bathing the whole body. This word is found *seventeen* times, but is never applied to baptism. Why not, if a little water applied to the face may be baptism?

*Rantizo* means to sprinkle, and is found, in the New Testament, *four* times. This would have been the very word used to designate baptism, if, as some say, that ordinance is properly performed by sprinkling. But this word is in no instance so used. Why not? Because sprinkling is not baptism.

*Keo* means to pour, and is found many

times in its various combinations, but is never applied to baptism. If baptism is pouring water on the candidate, why was not this word sometimes used to express it?

*Katharizo* means to *purify*, to cleanse, and is found *thirty* times, but never applied to the ordinance of baptism. If, as some say, the ordinance means to purify, this word would have expressed it.

Let it be asked again, why did Christ and his apostles, of all the words in the Greek language, select always and only that *one* which means strictly and positively *dipping*, or *immersion*, and nothing else, to designate the ordinance which he commanded, and they administered? Simply, and only, because baptism meant *dipping*, or immersing, and nothing else.

#### ALLUSIONS TO THE ORDINANCE.

The manner in which the Apostle Paul alludes to baptism, indicates his idea of the nature of it. He says: "Therefore we are

*buried* with him by baptism into death.”\*

And again: “Buried with him in baptism.”†

Could the apostle have had any other idea of baptism, than that of a submersion, in which the candidate was put wholly under water, in the likeness of a burial? This must have been his conception of it.

ABP. TILLOTSON, on these passages, says: “Anciently those who were baptized were *immersed* and *buried* in the water, to represent their death to sin; and then did rise up out of the water, to signify their entrance upon a new life. And to these customs the apostle alludes.”‡

TURRETIN says: “And indeed baptism was performed in that age and in those countries, by *immersion* of the whole body into water.”§

ZWINGLE says: “When ye were *immersed* into the water of baptism, ye were engrafted into the death of Christ.”||

\* Rom. vi. 4.

† Col. ii. 12.

‡ Works, vol. i., p. 179.

§ Com. on Rom. vi. 3, 4.

|| Annot. on Rom. vi. 4. See Conant's Append. to Matt.



BENSON says: "Buried with him by baptism:—alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by *immersion*."\*

DIODATI says: "In baptism being *dipped* in water according to the ancient ceremony, it is a sacred sign unto us that sin ought to be drowned in us by God's Spirit."†

BLOOMFIELD says: "There is a plain allusion to the ancient custom of baptism by *immersion*; and I agree with Koppe and Rosenmuller, that there is reason to regret it should have been abandoned in most Christian churches, especially as it has so evidently a reference to the mystic sense of baptism."‡

CONYBEARE says: "This passage cannot be understood, unless it be borne in mind, that the primitive baptism was by *immersion*."§

SAM'L. CLARKE, on the same, says: "In the primitive times the manner of baptizing was by *immersion*, or dipping the whole body into

\* Comment on Rom. vi. 4. † Annot. Rom. vi. 4.

‡ Recens. Synop. on Rom. vi. 4.

§ Life and Epist. Paul. Rom. vi. 4.

the water. And this manner of doing it, was a very significant emblem of the dying and rising again referred to by St. Paul, in the above mentioned similitude.”\*

JOHN WESLEY says: “Buried with him,—alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by *immersion*.”†

WHITBY says: “It being so expressly declared, that we are buried with Christ in baptism, by being buried under water.”‡

FRITSCHÉ says: “But that in accordance with the nature of the word, baptism was then performed, not by sprinkling upon, but by *submerging*, is proved especially by Rom. vi. 4.”§

EST says: “For *immersion* represents to us Christ’s burial; and so also his death. For the tomb is a symbol of death; since none but the dead are buried. Moreover the *emersion*.

\* Expos. Ch. Catech. 294. Ed. 6.

† Note, Rom. vi. 4.

‡ Com. in loco.

§ Com. on Matt., vol. i., p. 120. See Conant’s App. to Matt., p. 103.

which follows the immersion, has a resemblance to the resurrection.”\*

MALDONATUS says: “For in Greek to be baptized is the same as to be submerged.”†

It certainly is not remarkable that these learned and pious men should express such opinions, for it is difficult to see how they could have understood these Scriptures in any other way.

#### OPINIONS OF COMMENTATORS.

Many expositors, eminent for their learning and their devout study of the Bible, have recorded their opinions as to the nature of baptism and the manner in which it was originally administered. The great question is, What do the Scriptures teach? Now what have been the opinions of such men as to the teaching of Scripture concerning baptism?

WITSIUS says: “It cannot be denied that

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\* Com. on Rom. vi. 3. Cited by Conant, App. to Matt., p. 100.

† Com. on Matt. xx. 22. Luke xii. 50.



the relative signification of *baptein*, and *baptizein*, is to plunge, to *dip*.\*

ZANCHIUS, whose opinion De Courey declares, "is worth a thousand others," says: "The proper signification of baptize, is to *immerse*, plunge under, to overwhelm in water."†

BP. TAYLOR says: "The custom of the ancient churches was not sprinkling, but *immersion*."‡

LUTHER says: "The term *baptism* is Greek: in Latin it may be translated *immersio*, since we immerse any thing into the water, that the whole may be covered with the water."§

MELANCTHON says: "Baptism is *immersion* into water, which is made with this admirable benediction."||

BP. SHERLOCK says: "Baptism, or our *immersion* into water, according to the ancient

\* Econ. Cov., p. 1213.

† Works, vol. vi., p. 217. Geneva, 1619.

‡ Doct. Dubit., B. 3, ch. 4, R. 15.

§ Works, vol. i., p. 71, Wit. Ed. 1582.

|| Melanct. Catec., Wit. 1580.

rite of administering it, is a figure of our burial with Christ, and of our conformity to his death."\*

CAVE says: "The party to be baptized was *wholly immersed*, or put under water."†

BEZA says: "Christ commanded us to be baptized; by which word it is certain *immersion* is signified."‡

VITRINGA says: "The act of baptizing is the *immersion* of believers in water. This expresses the force of the word."§

MEDE says: "There was no such thing as *sprinkling* used in baptism, in the apostles' days, nor for many ages after them."||

BP. BOSSUET says: "To baptize signifies to *plunge*, as is granted by all the world."¶

GROTIUS says: "That baptism used to be

\* See Bloom., Crit. Dig., vol. v., p. 537.

† Primit. Christ., p. 1, ch. 10, p. 320, Lond. 1682.

‡ Epist. ad Thom. Tillium., Annot. on Mark vii. 4.

§ Aphor. 884.

|| Discourse on Titus iii. 5.

¶ Stennett against Russen, p. 174.

performed by *immersion*, and not by pouring, appears by the proper signification of the word, and by the places chosen for the administration of the rite.”\*

STORR and FLATT say: “The disciples of our Lord could understand his command in no other manner than as enjoining *immersion*: for the baptism of John, to which Jesus himself submitted, and also the earlier baptism of the disciples of Jesus, were performed by dipping the subject into cold water.”†

DIODATI says: “Baptized,—that is to say, ducked in the water, for a sacred sign and seal of the expiation and remission of sins.”‡

CALVIN says: “The word baptize, signifies to *immerse*; and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.”§

SAM’L. CLARKE says: “In the primitive times

\* Annot. on Matt. iii. 6, John iii. 23.

† Bib. Theology, B. 4, sec. 109, par. 4.

‡ Annot. on Matt. iii. 6.

§ Institutes, S. 4, ch. 15, sec. 19.



the manner of baptizing was by *immersion*, or dipping the whole body into water.”\*

BLOOMFIELD says: “There is here plainly a reference to the ancient mode of baptism by *immersion*.”†

SCHOLZ says: “Baptism consists in the *immersion* of the whole body in water.”‡

SCHAFF says: “*Immersion*, and not sprinkling, was unquestionably the original form. This is shown by the very meaning of the Greek words *baptizo*, *baptisma*, and *baptismos*, used to designate the rite.”§

Many others, the most distinguished among biblical students and commentators, both dead and living, could be adduced to the same effect. To some minds it may add force to this testimony, to say that all here cited are Pedobaptist authorities.

\* Expos. Ch. Cate., p. 294, Ed. 6.

† Expos. Rom. vi. 4.      ‡ Com. on Matt. iii. 6.

§ Hist. Apost. Ch., p. 488. Merc. Ed. 1851.

See also Noel on Bap., ch. iii., sec. 8.

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HISTORICAL EVIDENCE.

Not a few men noted for their learning and industry, have written histories of the early Christian churches, describing the customs of those churches in the times immediately succeeding the apostles. What do they say of the practice then prevailing, and during the first centuries, concerning baptism?

BARNABAS, the companion of St. Paul, in an epistle ascribed to him, and which must have been very early written, whoever may have been the author, speaks of baptism as a going "down into the water." "We go down into the water, full of sin and filth, but we come up bearing prints in our heads," is his language.\*

HERMAS, writing about A.D. 95, in the "Shepherd," a work ascribed to him, speaks of the apostles as having gone "down into the water," with those they baptized, "and come up again."†

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\* Cath. Epist., sec. 9. Cited by Broughton, Hist. Dict. Art. Bap.

† Stennett to Russen, p. 143.

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JUSTIN MARTYR, writing about A.D. 140, speaks of those baptized, as “washed in the water,”\* in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

TERTULLIAN, writing about A.D. 204, says: the person to be baptized “is let down into the water, and with a few words said, is *dipped*.”†

HIPPOLYTUS, about A.D. 225, says: “For he who goes down with faith into the bath of regeneration, is arrayed against the evil one, and on the side of Christ. He comes up from the baptism bright as the sun, flashing forth the rays of righteousness.”‡

GREGORY, A.D. 360, says: “We are buried with Christ by baptism, that we may also rise with him.”§

BASIL, A.D. 360, says: “By three *immer-*

\* Apology, secs. 79, 85, 86; Reeve's trans.—Orchard's Hist. Bap., secs. 1, 2, 3.

† De Bapt., ch. 2.

‡ Dis. on the Theoph. 10.—Conant's App. to Matt.

§ Stennett's Reply, p. 144.

sions the great mystery of baptism is accomplished;" referring to true baptism.\*

AMBROSE, A.D. 374, says: "Thou saidst, I do believe, and wast *immersed* in water; that is, thou wast buried."†

CYRIL, A.D. 374, says: "Candidates are first anointed with consecrated oils; they are then conducted to the laver, and asked three times, if they believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; then they are *dipped* three times into the water, and retire by three distinct efforts."‡

CHRYSOSTOM, A.D. 398, says: "To be baptized and *plunged* in the water, and then to emerge, or rise again, is a symbol of our descent into the grave, and our ascent out of it."§

\* Baronius, Ann. v. Bing. Antiq., B. xi., ch. xi.

† Stennett's Ans., p. 144. Bing. Antiq., B. ii., ch. ii.

‡ Dupin's Eccl. Hist., ch. vi. v. 2.—Orchard's Hist. Bap., p. 43, Nash. Ed. 1855.

§ Com. on 1 Cor. Hom. 40, 1.—Bingham's Christ. Antiq., ch. 11.—See also, on all these Fathers, Conant's App. to Matt.

SALMASIUS says: "Baptism is *immersion*, and was formerly celebrated according to the force and meaning of the name. Now it is only *rantism*, or sprinkling, not immersion, nor dipping."\*

BINGHAM, in his *Christian Antiquities*, says: "The ancients thought that *immersion*, or burying under water, did more lively represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, as well as our own death to sin, and rising again into righteousness."†

MOSHEIM says: "In this century (the 1st) baptism was administered in convenient places, without the public assembles; and by *immersing* the candidate wholly in water."‡

NEANDER says: "In respect to the form of baptism, it was, in conformity with the original institution, and the original import of the symbol, performed by *immersion*, as a sign of

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\* Wolf. Crit. Matt. xxviii. 19. De Caes. Viro. p. 669.

† Christ. Antiq., B. 11, ch. 11.

‡ Eccl. Hist., B. 1, Cent. 1, part 2, ch. 4.



entire baptism into the Holy Spirit, of being entirely penetrated by the same.”\*

WADDINGTON says: “The sacraments of the primitive church were two,—that of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. The ceremony of *immersion*, the oldest form of baptism, was performed in the name of the three persons of the Trinity.”†

SCHAFF says: “Finally, so far as it respects the mode and manner of outward baptizing, there can be no doubt that *immersion*, and not sprinkling, was the original normal form.”‡

THE ENCY. ECCLESIASTICA says: “Whatever weight, however, may be in these reasons, as a defence for the present practice of sprinkling, it is evident that during the first ages of the church, and for *many centuries afterward*, the practice of immersion prevailed.”§

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\* Ch. Hist., vol. i., p. 310.—Also Hist. Plan. and Train, vol. i., p. 222.

† Ch. Hist., ch. 2, sec. 3.

‡ Hist. Chris. Ch., p. 488.—Mercersburg Ed.

§ Art. Baptism.

DR. WHITBY says: "And this *immersion* being religiously observed *by all Christians* for *thirteen centuries*, and approved by our Church;" referring to the Church of England.\*

DR. STACKHOUSE says: "Several authors have shown and proved that this manner of *immersion* continued as much as possible to be used for *thirteen hundred years* after Christ."†

BP. BOSSUET says: "We are able to make it appear, by the acts of councils, and by ancient rituals, that for *thirteen hundred years*, baptism was thus administered, (by immersion,) throughout the whole church, as far as possible."‡

DR. BRENNER says: "*Thirteen hundred years*, was baptism generally and originally performed by the *immersion* of the person under water; and only in extraordinary cases was sprinkling, or affusion, permitted. These

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\* Annot. Rom. vi. 4. † Hist. Bible, B. 8., ch. 1.

‡ Stennett ad Russen, p. 176. Booth's *Pedo. Ex.*, ch. 4.

latter methods of baptism were called in question, and even prohibited.”\*

HAGENBACH, in his History of Doctrines, says: “From the *thirteenth century*, sprinkling came into more general use in the West. The Greek Church, however, and the church of Milano, still retained the practice of immersion.”†

COLEMAN, in his Antiquities, says; “The practice of *immersion* continued even until the *thirteenth* or *fourteenth* century. Indeed it has never been formally abandoned.”‡

VAN COLLN, in his History of Doctrines, says: “*Immersion* in water was general until the *thirteenth* century; among the Latins it was then displaced by sprinkling, but retained by the Greeks.”§

WINER, in his lectures, says: “Affusion was at first applied only to the sick, but was

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\* Hist. Exhib. Bap., p. 306.

† Hist. Doct., vol. ii., p. 84. Note 1.

‡ Ancient Christianity, ch. 14, sec. 8.

§ Hist. Doct., vol. ii., p. 303.

gradually introduced for others, after the *seventh* century, and in the *thirteenth* became the prevailing practice in the West.”\*

BINGHAM, in his *Origines*, says: “As this (dipping) was the original apostolical practice, so it continued the *universal* practice of the church for many ages.”†

AUGUSTI, in his *Archæology*, says: “Immersion in water was general, until the *thirteenth* century, among the Latins; it was then displaced by sprinkling, but retained by the Greeks.”‡

NEANDER says: “The usual form of submersion at baptism, practiced by the Jews, was passed over to the Gentile Christians. Indeed this form was the most suitable to signify that which Christ intended to render an object of contemplation by such a symbol: the *immersion* of the whole man in the spirit of a new life.”§

\* Lect. Christ. Antiq.

† Antiq. Christ. Ch., B. 11, ch. 11.

‡ Archæ. vol. v., p. 5, vol. vii., p. 229.

§ Planting and Training, p. 161.

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These quotations do not exhaust historical evidence, but are sufficient to satisfy impartial minds, as to the primitive and long continued practice of immersion in the Christian churches. These Pedobaptist writers agree that, for *thirteen hundred years*, immersion was the universally prevailing mode of baptism, departed from only in special or extraordinary cases; even then abandoned by the Latin or Romish church only, while the Greek and Oriental Churches retained, and do to this day retain, the original form of that sacred rite.

#### THE EXISTENCE OF BAPTISTERIES.

The places sought and prepared for the proper and convenient administration of baptism during the early ages of Christianity, clearly indicate the form of the ordinance. For the people would never resort to rivers, pools, cisterns, or other large bodies of water, for the mere purpose of sprinkling the candidates. We know that John the Baptist and the dis-

ciples of Jesus baptized in the Jordan, and at Enon, "because there was much water there."

TERTULLIAN says: "Peter baptized in the Tiber at Rome, as John had done in Jordan; and there was no difference whether a man was baptized in the sea, or a lake, in a river, or a fountain."

As Christianity spread, and converts multiplied, in many places, especially in large cities, there were few opportunities for the convenient and agreeable administration of the ordinance. Other cities were not filled with pools, fitted for personal ablutions, as was Jerusalem, where the gospel gained its first converts. Then began to be erected *baptist-eries*, expressly designed and used for this purpose. These, at first, were constructed in the simplest manner; but in process of time large, costly, and imposing edifices, were built for this use.

MOSHEIM says: "For the more convenient administration of baptism, sacred fonts, or

*Baptisteria*, were erected in the porches of the temples."\* This was in the fourth century.

BROUGHTON says: "The place of baptism was at first unlimited; being some pond or lake, some spring or river, but always as near as possible to the place of public worship. Afterward they had their *baptisteries*, or (as we call them) fonts, built at first near the church, then in the church porch, and at last in the church itself." "The baptistery was properly speaking the whole house or building in which the font stood; which latter was only the fountain, or pool of water, in which the *immersion* was performed."†

Dr. MURDOCK says: "The baptisteries were properly buildings adjacent to the churches, in which the catechumens were instructed, and where were a sort of cisterns, into which water was let at the time of baptism, and in which the candidates were baptized by immersion."‡

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\* Eccl. Hist. Cent. 4, B. 2, p. 2, ch. 4, sec. 7.

† Hist. Dict., Arts. Baptism and Baptistery.

‡ Mosh. Eccl. Hist., vol. i., p. 281, note 15.

EUSEBIUS, CYRIL, and AMBROSE, all speak of them, as commonly used in their times; from three to four hundred years after Christ. So do JUSTIN MARTYR, in the middle of the second century, and CLEMENT of Rome, at the close of the first.”\*

COLEMAN says: “The first baptistery, or place appropriated to baptism, of which any mention is made, occurs in a biography of the fourth century, and this was prepared in a private house.”†

HAGENBACH says: “That baptism in the beginning was administered in the open air, in rivers and pools; and that it was by *immersion*, we know from the narratives of the New Testament. In later times there were prepared great baptismal fonts, or chapels. The person to be baptized descended several steps into the reservoir of water, and then the whole body was immersed under the water.”‡

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\* Bingham. Antiq. Chris. Ch., B. 8., ch. vii., sec. 1.  
Coleman's Anc. Chris., ch. xix. sec. 10.

† Ancient Christ'y Ex., ch. xix., sec. 10.

‡ Hist. Christ. Church, ch. xix., p. 324.



CAVE says: "These baptisteries were usually very large and capacious, not only that they might comport with the general custom of those times, of persons baptized being *immersed*, or put under water; but because, the stated times of baptism returning so seldom, great multitudes were usually baptized at the same time."\*

BINGHAM says: "In the apostolical age, and some time after, before churches and baptisteries were generally erected, they baptized in any place where they had convenience, as John baptized in Jordan, and Philip baptized the Eunuch in the wilderness, and Paul the jailer in his own house."†

The term "baptistry," was applied properly to the pool, or font of water, but was also used to designate the building in which the pool was placed.

THE ENCY. BRITANNICA says of the baptistry: "In the ancient church it was one of the

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\* Primitive Chris., p. i., ch. x., p. 312.

† Chris. Antiq., B. II., ch. vii., sec. 11.

*exedrae*, or buildings distinct from the church itself. Thus it continued till the sixth century, when the baptisteries began to be taken into the church porch, and afterwards into the church itself."\*

BRANDE says: "A building destined for the purpose of administering the rite of baptism. The baptistery was entirely distinct from the church up to the end of the sixth century; after which period the interior of the church received it."†

Some of these structures are still preserved, and others are well known to have existed; as those of Florence, Venice, Pisa, Naples, Bologna, Ravenna. That of the Lateran at Rome is considered the oldest now existing, having been erected A.D. 324. That at Pisa was completed in 1160, the entire structure being 115 feet in diameter, by 172 in height; of a circular form. That at Florence is an octagonal building, 90 feet in diameter, with a

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\* Art. Baptistery.

† Dict. Art. Sci. and Lit., Art. Bapt.

lofty dome. That of St. Sophia at Constantinople, erected by Constantine, A. D. 337, was capable of accommodating a numerous council, whose sessions were held in it. Most of the existing baptisteries are large, elaborate, and costly edifices.

The pool for baptizing was an open cistern in the centre of the large hall, or main part of the building.

Now can any one suppose these buildings would have been provided, unless immersion had been the mode of administering baptism?\*

#### USAGE OF THE GREEK CHURCH.

It is worthy of no small consideration certainly, that the Greek church, so called, in distinction from the Roman, has always prac-

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\* For a full account of Baptisteries see Robinson's History of Baptism, ch. xii., where he has with much labor collected a large amount of information on this subject. Also, Duncan's Hist. Baptists, ch. v., sec. 3. Also, Crystal's History of the mode of Baptism.

ticed immersion for baptism. This church extends over Greece, Russia, Egypt, Arabia, Palestine, Abyssinia, and other oriental countries. Like the Romish Church, it practices many absurd and superstitious rites, and holds many corruptions in doctrine; but as to the mode of baptism, it retains the primitive custom of *dipping* the candidate.

DR. WALL, in his history of infant baptism, says: "The Greek Church in all its branches does still use *immersion*, and so do all other Christians in the world, except the Latins. All those nations that do now, or formerly did submit to the authority of the Bishop of Rome, do ordinarily baptize their infants by pouring or sprinkling. But *all other Christians in the world*, who never owned the Pope's usurped power, do, and ever did, *dip* their infants in the ordinary use. All the Christians in Asia, all in Africa, and about one third in Europe, are of the last sort."\*

All the Christians in the world, then, accord-

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\* Hist. Inf. Bap. vol. 2. p. 376. Ed. 3.

ing to this writer, except about two thirds of Europe, and we may add, a part of America, have always practiced immersion for baptism. It is certain that to this day, the Greek Church, even in the severe climates of Russia and Siberia, baptizes, whether adults or infants, by immersion.

BROUGHTON says: "The Greek Church differs from the Romish, as to the rite of baptism chiefly, in performing it by *immersion*, or plunging the infant all over in the water."\*

STOURDZA says: "The church of the West has then departed from the example of Jesus Christ; she has obliterated the whole sublimity of the exterior sign. *Baptism* and *immersion* are identical. Baptism by *aspersion* is, as if one should say, *immersion* by *aspersion*; or any other absurdity of the same nature."†

EDINBURG ENCYCLOPÆDIA says: "The Greek

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\* Histor. Dict., Art. Baptism. Also Ricaut's Gr. ch.

† Consid. Orthodox Ch., p. 87. Conant's Append., p. 99.



Church, as well as the schismatics in the East, retained the custom of immersing the whole body ; but the western church adopted, in the thirteenth century, the mode of baptism by sprinkling, which has been continued by the Protestants, Baptists only excepted.”\*

THE PANTALOGIA says : the Greek Church is “ that part of the Christian church which was first established in Greece, and is now spread over a larger extent of country than any other established church. Amid all their trifling rites they practice *trine immersion*, which is unquestionably the original manner.”†

RICAUT says : “ Thrice *dipping* or plunging, this Church holds to be as necessary to the form of baptism, as water is to the matter.”‡

COLEMAN says : “ The eastern church has uniformly retained the form of immersion as indispensable to the validity of the ordinance ; and repeat the rite whenever they have re-

\* Article Baptism.

† Article Greek Ch.

‡ State of Greek Ch., p. 163.

ceived to their communion persons who have been baptized in another manner.”\*

DEYLINGIUS says: “The Greeks retain the rite of *immersion* to this day; as Jeremiah the Patriarch of Constantinople declares.”†

DR. KING says: “The Greek church uniformly practices the *trine immersion*, undoubtedly the most primitive manner.”‡

BUDEUS says: “That the Greeks defend *immersion* is manifest, and has been frequently observed by learned men; which Ludolphus informs us is the practice of the Ethiopians.”§

ENCY. BRITANNICA, says: “The Greek Church differs from the Romish, as to the rite of baptism, chiefly in performing it by *immersion*, or plunging the infant all over in the water.”||

The Romish Church claims the right to

\* Ancient Christ’y. Ex., ch. xviv., sec. 12.

† De Prud. Past., p. 3, ch. iii., sec. 26.

‡ Rites and Cer. Greek Ch., p. 192.

§ Theol. Dogmat., B. 5, ch. i., sec. 5.

|| Art. Baptism.



change ordinances; and for that reason, and on that ground alone, abolished immersion, and now practices aspersion for baptism. And this aspersion, or sprinkling, the Protestant Churches have received, with other ecclesiastical perversions, from the Romish. But the Greek Church still retains the primitive form of dipping, though in the baptism of children, as in many other things, it has departed from primitive usage.

#### DESIGN OF THE ORDINANCE.

What was the design of baptism? What was the ordinance intended to express, or represent? As an outward rite it must be a type, or sign, of some moral truth or spiritual fact, meant to be taught or enforced by its observance. And the form of the rite, the manner of the ordinance, must be such as properly to express its design and meaning. If the form be so changed that its symbolic force is lost, and its design no longer seen in its administration, then, manifestly, it is no



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longer baptism in fact; its teaching is lost, and its chief purpose fails.

But the *design* of baptism is clearly this: to show forth the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. This is the teaching of the rite itself. And every candidate who receives the ordinance, professes thereby faith in the merits of Christ's death, as the ground of his own hope and salvation; fellowship with his sufferings, and a declaration of his own death to sin, and rising to a new life; a putting off the old man as in a burial, and a putting on the new man, as he rises to newness of life in Christ. It also typifies the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; and declares, in addition, the candidate's hope of a resurrection from the dead, even as Christ, into whose death he is buried, was raised up by the glory of the Father.

TYNDALE says: "The plunging into the water signifieth that we die, and are buried



with Christ, as concerning the old life of sin. And the pulling out again signifieth that we rise again with Christ in a new life full of the Holy Ghost.”\*

ADAM CLARKE says: “But as they received baptism as an emblem of death, in voluntarily going under the water; so they receive it as an emblem of the resurrection unto eternal life, in coming up out of the water.”†

DR. NEWTON says: “Baptism was usually performed by immersion, or dipping the whole body under water, to represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, together; and therewith signify the person’s own dying to sin, the destruction of its power, and his resurrection to a new life.”‡

FRANKIUS says: “The baptism of Christ represented his sufferings; and his coming up

\* Obedience of a Christian Man, p. 143, cited by Conant, App. to Matt., p. 93.

† Baptism for the dead; Com. 1 Cor. xv. 29.

‡ Prac. Expos. Cat., p. 297.

out of the water, his resurrection from the dead.”\*

BAXTER says: “In our baptism we are dipped under the water, as signifying our covenant profession, that as he was buried for sin, we are dead and buried to sin.”†

SAURIN says: “The ceremony of wholly immersing us in water, when we were baptized, signified that we died to sin.”‡

BUDDEUS says: “Immersion, which was used in former times, was a symbol and an image of the death and the burial of Christ.”§

PICTETUS says: “That immersion into, and emersion out of the water, practiced by the ancients, signify the death of the old man, and the resurrection of the new man.”||

GROTIUS says: “There was in baptism, as administered in former times, an image both

\* Program. xiv., p. 343.

† Para. Rom. vi. 4.—Col. ii. 12, et al.

‡ Sermons, vol. iii., p. 171. Robinson's Trans.

§ Dogmat. Theol., B. 5, ch. i., sec. 8.

|| Theol. Chris., B. 14, ch. iv., sec. 13.

of a burial and a resurrection ; which in regard to Christ was external, in regard to Christians, internal.”\*

ABP. LEIGHTON says: “Buried with Christ . . . . where the dipping into water is referred to as representing our dying with Christ; and the return thence as expressive of our rising with him.”†

DR. CAVE says: “As in immersion there are in a manner three several acts, the putting the person into water, his abiding there for a little time, and his rising up again; so by these were represented Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection; and in conformity thereunto our dying unto sin, the destruction of its power, and our resurrection to a new course of life.”‡

DR. HAMMOND says: “It is a thing that every Christian knows, that the immersion in baptism, refers to the death of Christ. The

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\* Annot. Rom. vi. 4, Col. ii. 12.

† Comment. 1 Peter iii. 21.

‡ Primitive Christ’y, p. 1, ch. x., p. 320.

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putting the person into the water, denotes and proclaims the death and burial of Christ.”\*

DR. BARROW says: “The action is baptizing or immersing, into water.” “The mersion also in water, and the emersion thence, doth figure our death to the former, and our reviving to a new life.”†

BP. BLOOMFIELD says: “There may also be (as the ancient commentators think) an allusion to the ancient mode of baptism by immersion; which, while typifying a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness, also had reference to the Christian communion with his Lord, both in death and resurrection from the dead.”‡

DR. TOWERSON says: “Therefore as there is so much the more reason to represent the rite of immersion as the *only legitimate* rite of baptism, because the *only one* that can answer the

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\* On Rom. vi. 3.

† Doctrine of the Sacraments, works, vol. iii., p. 43.

‡ Greek N. Test., on 1 Cor. xv. 29. Baptism for the dead.

ends of its institution, and those things which were to be signified by it; so, especially, if, as is well known and undoubtedly of great force, the general practice of the primitive church was agreeable thereto, and the practice of the Greek Church to this very day. For who can think that either one or the other would have been so tenacious of so troublesome a rite, were it not that they were well assured, as they of the primitive church might well be, of its being *the only instituted and legitimate one.*"\*

Such are the opinions of candid Pedobaptist divines, as to the design of baptism. Sprinkling or pouring water on a candidate has no force in the direction of this sacred symbolism. It cannot show the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; nor the disciple's death to sin, and his rising to a new life. If immersion, therefore, be not used, the entire force of the ordinance is destroyed, and its design lost sight of.

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\* On Sacram. Bap., part 3, pp. 51-58.

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Sprinkling means nothing, it sets forth no great doctrine of the gospel. Only when the candidate is buried wholly beneath the water, and raised again, does the beauty, force, and meaning which divine wisdom intended, appear in that sacred ordinance.

#### CONVENIENCES FOR BAPTISM.

Not a few defenders of sprinkling, with more boldness than learning or discretion, have asserted, and attempted to show, that there was not a sufficient depth of water in the Jordan, nor convenient means in Jerusalem for immersing the multitudes, said to have been baptized by John, and the disciples of Jesus; especially the large numbers converted at the Pentecost, and under the subsequent preaching of the apostles.

Such assertions indicate the ignorance or the recklessness of those who make them, and show how unfitted by prejudices even good men may be to discuss the merits of a grave subject. An objection so trifling deserves

small notice. We know that Jesus and the disciples of John were immersed; and that the early converts to Christianity were "buried with Christ in baptism;" further than this we need not feel bound to prove. But definite and positive information is not wanting on these points; and some of it may be of service here.

LIEUT. LYNCH, of the United States navy, was, in 1848, sent out by his government in charge of an expedition to explore the river Jordan, and the Dead Sea. This was done for antiquarian research, and for the advancement of science. The expedition passed down the entire length of the Jordan in boats; made frequent and careful surveys, which were accurately recorded, and officially published. The river was found to vary in width from seventy five to two hundred feet, and in depth from *three to twelve feet*. At Bethabara, where tradition has fixed the place of our Saviour's baptism, and where John baptized the multitudes, Lieut. Lynch



gives the width as *one hundred and twenty feet*, and the greatest depth, as *twelve feet*. This certainly must be deep enough for immersing candidates.

It is a well known fact, that thousands of Christian pilgrims from adjacent countries visit this place annually at a certain season, to bathe in the waters where they believe the Saviour was baptized. The expedition witnessed one of these scenes, and had their boats in readiness to prevent accidents, which it was feared might occur with so great a crowd of fanatical devotees in so great a depth of water. Had Pedopaptist advocates of sprinkling been there, they might have found an argument as perilous as it would have been convincing, for a sufficient depth of water in the Jordan for the immersion of believers.\*

DR. ROBINSON, who made a careful survey of Palestine, including the Jordan, in 1840, makes statements corroborative of what has

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\* Lynch's Dead Sea Expedition, chaps. 10, 11.

here been said. He also cites Seetzen, who visited it in 1806; Burckhardt, who explored it in 1812; Irby and Mangles, in 1818, and Buckingham about the same time. These distinguished travelers published the results of their explorations, which can be consulted.\*

BP. STANLEY, who visited the Holy Land in 1853, and also witnessed the bathing of the pilgrims, says of the baptism of John: "He came baptizing, that is signifying to those who came to him, as he plunged them under the rapid torrent, the forgiveness and forsaking of their sins." "There began that sacred rite which has since spread throughout the world, through the vast baptisteries of the southern and oriental churches, gradually dwindling to the little fonts of the north and west."†

DR. THOMSON, for a quarter of a century familiar with the Holy Land, traversed it in 1857, visited the Jordan in the vicinity of

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\* Rob. Bib. Researches, vol. ii., sec. 10, pp. 257-267.

† Sinai and Palestine, ch. vii., pp. 306, 307.

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Jericho, and witnessed the bathing of the Greek pilgrims. Of this singular and exciting scene he gives a graphic description. He says the men *ducked* the women, somewhat as the farmers do their sheep, while the little children were carried and plunged under water trembling like so many lambs." Being Pedobaptists, these oriental fanatics may not have performed their rites properly. But there was evidently an abundance of water. He says; "The current is astonishingly rapid, and at least ten feet deep." "Two Christians, and a Turk, who ventured too far, were drowned, without the possibility of a rescue." A perilous depth of water, certainly. "At the bathing place it was twenty rods wide." "Boats could do nothing in such a current; and it is too deep to ford."\*

The city of Jerusalem was most abundantly supplied with water; to a large extent by pools or cisterns, many of which were of great size. Outside, but near the city, were

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\* The Land and the Book, vol. ii., p. 445-6.

others of still larger dimensions. These were constructed, partly to supply the city with water for ordinary uses, and partly to furnish convenience for the many ablutions required by the Mosaic law. They were abundant in the days of our Saviour, and some of them still remain, containing water, and affording, even now, admirable conveniences for the administration of baptism in its primitive form. Others, now in a ruined state, distinctly reveal their original form and magnitude. The greater part of them were in good repair, and continued to be used for hundreds of years after Christ, as history abundantly certifies.

DR. ROBINSON also visited Jerusalem, and made careful and extensive investigations touching the topography and antiquities of the holy city. The results published in his researches in 1841, have been fully corroborated by other, and more recent surveys. They are as follows :\*

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\* Rob. Bib. Researches, vol. i., pp. 480-515. See also Thomson's Land and Book, vol. ii., p. 64, vol. ii., p. 446.

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The pool of Bethesda is three hundred and sixty feet long, one hundred and thirty feet wide, and seventy-five feet deep; and was a considerable pond when full, covering more than an acre of ground. The pool of Siloam, fifty-three feet long, eighteen wide, and nineteen deep, now holds two or three feet of water, which can readily be increased to a much greater depth. The upper pool, three hundred and sixteen feet long, two hundred and eighteen wide, and eighteen deep, covers an acre and a half of ground. The pool of Hezekiah is two hundred and forty feet long, one hundred and forty-four wide, and is partly filled with water. The lower pool, or pool of Gihon, five hundred and ninety-two feet long, two hundred and sixty wide, and forty deep, covers more than three and a half acres. This pool is now dry; but so late as the time of the Crusaders was fully supplied with water, and free to the use of all. Several others existed, either in the city or in its immediate vicinity. They were all construc-



ted with sides gradually sloping inward, so as to make a descent into the water, to any required depth, safe and easy, and were doubtless in constant use for purposes of ablution.

DR. BARCLAY, for many years missionary in Jerusalem, (and the most competent and reliable of all authorities, so far as that city is concerned,) abundantly substantiates the above statements.\*

DR. THOMSON, for twenty-five years missionary in Syria and Palestine, in his effort to identify the scene of the Eunuch's baptism by Philip, says: "He would then have met the chariot somewhere south-west of Latron. There is a fine stream of water, called Murubbah, deep enough even in June to satisfy the utmost wishes of our Baptist friends."†

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\* City of the Great King. See also Prof. Chase's "Design of Baptism," with Dr. Sampson's Article, p. 115. Boston Ed. 1851.

† The Land and the Book, vol. ii., p. 310.



How fully these facts and authorities vindicate the truth as held by Baptists, let each one judge. And how utterly groundless are all arguments urged against immersion as the primitive mode of baptism, because of an insufficiency of water in Jerusalem, or the river Jordan, can as easily be seen. Let it be further remembered, that these researches were not made for the sake of establishing a theory, but for purposes of scientific investigation, and chiefly by those who had no doctrinal sympathy with Baptists.

#### ORIGIN OF POURING AND SPRINKLING.

When, where, and why, did pouring and sprinkling for baptism arise, and this human device supersede the divine institution? This question Pedobaptists themselves have most fully and satisfactorily answered. Their testimony abundantly vindicates the views of Baptists.

History records no departure from the primitive custom of *immersion*, until about

the middle of the third century, or A.D. 250. The first authenticated instance, is that of *Novatian*. Eusebius gives this case in his history, and no earlier instance could be found by Dr. Wall, in his laborious researches. Good evidence that no earlier case existed. What he failed to discover, in this respect, it would be difficult to find.

NOVATIAN being sick, and, as was supposed, about to die, greatly desired to be baptized. As he was believed to be too feeble to be dipped, water was poured profusely over him as he lay upon his bed, so as to resemble as nearly possible a submersion. The word here used, *perichutheis*, (perfusus,) has usually been rendered *besprinkle*; it means rather, to pour round about, or upon and over one. This was doubtless actually done in the case of *Novatian*. And this, it was thought, would answer the purpose, especially as the necessity was so great.\*

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\* See this case treated by Dr. Chase, *Design of Baptism*, p. 53.



EUSEBIUS, the historian, has this account of the case, quoting from Cornelius, bishop of Rome. "He fell into a grievous distemper, and it being supposed that he would die immediately, he received baptism, being besprinkled with water on the bed whereon he lay, if that can be termed baptism."\* The historian himself seemed doubtful of the validity of this rite.

VALESIIUS makes the following remarks on the passage: "This word (*perichutheis*) Rufinus very well renders *besprinkled*, (*perfusus*.) For people which were sick, and baptized on their beds, could not be dipped in water by the priest, but were besprinkled with water by him. This baptism was thought imperfect, and not solemn, for several reasons. Also they who were thus baptized were called ever afterward *Clinici*; and by the twelfth canon of the council of Neocesa-

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\* Eccl. Hist., B. 6, ch. xliii. Bingham Chris. Ant., ch. xi., sec. 14.

rea, these Clinici were prohibited priesthood.”\*

DR. WALL makes this statement respecting the case of Novatian. “Anno Domini, 251, Novatian was, by one part of the clergy and people of Rome, chosen bishop of that church, in opposition to Cornelius, who had before been chosen by the major part, and was already ordained. Cornelius does, in a letter to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, vindicate his right, showing that Novatian came not canonically to his orders of priesthood, much less was capable of being chosen bishop; for that all the clergy, and a great many of the laity were against his being ordained presbyter, because it was not lawful, they said, for one that had been baptized in his bed in time of sickness, as he had been, to be admitted to any office of the clergy.”†

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\* Cited by Booth, *Ped. Ex.*, ch. vii., Ref. ii. Also Chase's *Des. Bap.*, p. 53.

† Euseb. *Ecl. Hist.*, B. 6, ch. xliii.—Wall's *Hist. Inf. Bap.*, p. 2, ch. 9, 463.

That such a substitute for baptism was regarded as unscriptural and improper at the time, is evident by the opposition made to Novatian on that account. But, from this time, the practice of sprinkling continued occasionally to be resorted to, in cases of sickness, and hence denominated "Clinic baptism," from *Clinica*, a couch or bed.

BP. TAYLOR says: "It was a formal and solemn question made by Magnus to Cyprian, whether they are to be esteemed right Christians who are only sprinkled with water and not washed or dipped."\*

DR. TOWERSON says: "The first mention we find of aspersion in the baptism of the elder sort, was in the case of the *Clinici*, or men who received baptism upon their sick beds."†

VENEMA says: "Sprinkling was used in the last moments of life on such as were called *Clinics*."‡

\* Duct. Dubit., B. 3, ch. iv., R. 15.

† Sac. Bap., p. 3, p. 59, ch. iv., sec. 110.

‡ Eccl. His.



SALMASIUS says: "The Clinics only, because they were confined to their beds, were baptized in a manner of which they were capable: Thus Novatian, when sick, received baptism, being *besprinkled*, not *baptized*."\*

GROTIUS says: "The custom of pouring or sprinkling seems to have prevailed in favor of those that were dangerously ill, and were desirous of giving up themselves to Christ; whom others called *Clinics*."†

In the Roman Church, pouring for baptism was tolerated in the *eighth* century, and in the *sixteenth* generally adopted, as a matter of convenience; that hierarchy presumptuously claiming the right to change ordinances.

DR. WALL says: "France seems to have been the first country in the world, where baptism by affusion was used ordinarily to persons in health, and in the public way of administering it."‡

\* De Vita Martini, ch. 15. Cited by Witsius, B. 4, ch. xvi., sec. 13.

† On Matt. iii. 6.

‡ Hist. Inf. Bap., p. 2, ch. ix., p. 470.

The same author states that Calvin prepared for the Genevan Church, and afterwards published to the world, "a form of administering the sacraments;" of which he adds, "for an office, or liturgy, of any church, this is, I believe, the first in the world that prescribes *aspersion* absolutely."\*

He further adds: "And for sprinkling, properly called, it seems it was, at 1645, just then beginning, and used by very few." "But sprinkling for the common use of baptizing was really introduced (in France first, and then in other Popish countries) in times of Popery."†

Of England he says: "The offices and liturgies did all along enjoin *dipping*, without any mention of pouring or sprinkling." About 1550, it began to prevail, being used first in the case of "weak children;" and "within the space of half a century, from 1550 to 1600, prevailed to be the more general." The English churches finally came

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\* Hist. Inf. Bap., p. 2, ch. ix., p. 470.

† Ibid.

to imitate the Genevan, and casting off the domination of the Pope, bowed to the authority of Calvin, and adopted pouring instead of dipping.\*

In 1643 the Westminster Assembly of divines voted in convocation, through the influence of Dr. Lightfoot, by one majority, against baptizing by immersion; and the year following, Parliament sanctioned their decision, and decreed that sprinkling should be the legal mode of administering the ordinance.†

THE EDINBURG ENCYCLOPEDIA, gives the following accounts of sprinkling:—"The first law to sanction aspersion as a mode of baptism, was by Pope Stephen II, A. D. 753. But it was not till the year 1311, that a council held at Ravenna, declared immersion or sprinkling to be indifferent. In this country, (Scotland,) however, sprinkling was never

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\* Hist. Inf. Bap., p. 2, ch. ix., p. 463-475.

† Pittman and Lightfoot's works, vol. 13, p. 300. Cited in Debates Campb. and Rice, p. 220. Also Edinb. Ency., Art. Bap.

practiced in ordinary cases till after the Reformation; and in England, even in the reign of Edward VI., (about 1550,) immersion was commonly observed." But during the reign of the Catholic Mary, who succeeded to the throne on the death of Edward, 1553, persecution drove many of the Protestants from their homes, not a few of whom, especially the Scotch, found an asylum in Geneva, where, under the influence of John Calvin, they imbibed a preference for sprinkling.\*

"These Scottish exiles," says the last quoted author, "who had renounced the authority of the Pope, implicitly acknowledged the authority of Calvin; and returning to their own country, with John Knox at their head, in 1559, established sprinkling in Scotland. From Scotland, this practice made its way into England in the reign of Elizabeth, but was not authorized by the established church."†

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA, much to the same effect, gives the case as follows:—

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\* Art. Baptism.

† Ibid.

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“What principally tended to confirm the practice of affusion or sprinkling, was, that several of our Protestant divines, flying into Germany and Switzerland during the bloody reign of Queen Mary, and coming home when Queen Elizabeth came to the crown, brought back with them a great zeal for the Protestant churches beyond the sea, where they had been received and sheltered. And having observed that at Geneva, and some other places, baptism was administered by sprinkling, they thought they could not do the Church of England a greater service than by introducing a practice dictated by so great an oracle as Calvin.”\*

Much more might be added; but what has been said would seem to be quite sufficient to prove the following facts:

1. That the baptism commanded and received by Christ, was immersion, or the dipping of the candidate wholly under water.
2. That this same form was used by the

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\* Article Baptism.





apostles, and early Christians, for many centuries after Christ.

3. That the first recorded departure from this custom of immersion was about A. D. 250. in the case of Novatian; no earlier instance being known.

4. From that time pouring or sprinkling were occasionally resorted to in cases of sick or feeble persons, or tender infants.

5. But for more than 1300 years, immersion was the prevailing practice of the Christian churches in baptism.

6. The Greek and other oriental churches, have never departed from the primitive mode, but still practice dipping.

7. And the substitution of aspersion for immersion, was one of the corruptions of the Papal Church, transmitted to, and accepted by Protestant Christians.

What sincere and honest minded disciple would be willing to disregard the plain command and manifest example of his Saviour, and accept a human dogma in their stead?

Or what true lover of Christ would knowingly, for convenience, or from prejudice or habit, allow himself to disregard the clearly expressed will of his Lord? "If ye love me," says our Lord, "keep my commandments."

Appropriate are the words of Cotton Mather:—"Let a precept be never so difficult to obey, or never so distasteful to flesh and blood, yet if I see it is God's command, my soul says, It is good; let me obey it till I die."\*

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\* Life of Jennings, p. 118.

## CHAPTER IV.

### INFANT BAPTISM.

**T**HE baptism of unconverted children, and unconscious infants, has become common through the Christian world. The Romish Church, the Greek Church, and most of the Protestant churches, practice it. Yet Baptists condemn it as unscriptural, unreasonable, and injurious. They believe that repentance and faith should always precede baptism; and that whenever one exercises these, whether old or young, then he should be admitted to the holy ordinance of baptism. But never till he has believed. Infants incapable of faith, are unfit for baptism.

Baptists make the following assertions respecting this practice :

1. That there is neither precept nor example found in the New Testament to authorize or



sanction infant baptism. Nor indeed is there even an allusion to it in the Scriptures,—very naturally, because it did not exist.

2. That Christ did not command it, nor did either the apostles or early Christians practice it.

3. That it arose with, and was a part of, the early corruptions of the Christian churches in after ages.

4. That the practice is presumptuous and censurable on the part of parents, sponsors, and administrators; and productive of evil, both to the child that receives it, and to the church that allows it.

If these statements be correct, how can the custom be maintained by intelligent Christians.

#### NOT OF SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY.

Nearly all the advocates and defenders of infant baptism have, with considerable candor, admitted that it was not instituted by Christ, nor practiced by the apostles or their immediate successors.

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DR. WALL, of the English Church, who wrote the History of Infant Baptism, a work so able, that the assembled clergy, in convocation, gave him a vote of thanks for his learned and able defence of this custom, says: "Among all the persons that are recorded as baptized by the apostles, there is no express mention of any infants."\*

FULLER says: "We do freely confess there is neither express precept nor precedent in the New Testament for the baptizing of infants."†

BP. BURNETT says: "There is no express precept or rule given in the New Testament for the baptism of infants."‡

BAXTER says: "I conclude that all examples of baptism in Scripture do mention only the administration of it to the professors of saving faith; and the precepts give us no other direction."§

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\* Hist. Inf. Bap., Introd., pp. 1, 55.

† Infants' Advoc., pp. 71, 150.

‡ Expos. 39 Articles, 27 Art.

§ Disput. of Right to Sacra., p. 156.



LUTHER says: "It cannot be proved by the sacred Scriptures, that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the apostles."\*

DR. GOODWIN says: "Baptism supposeth regeneration sure in itself, first. Sacraments are never administered for to begin, or to work grace; you suppose children to *believe* before you baptize them. Read all the Acts, still it is said, They *believed*, and were baptized."†

CELARIUS says: "Infant baptism is neither commanded in the sacred Scriptures, nor is it confirmed by apostolic examples."‡

LIMBORCH says: "There is no instance can be produced from which it may indisputably be inferred that any child was baptized by the apostles."§

\* Vanity Inf. Bap., part 2, p. 8. See Booth's Pedo. Ex., part 2, ch. i.

† Works, vol. i., part 1, p. 200.

‡ Shyn. Hist. Mennon., p. 168.

§ Com. Syst. Divin., B. 5., ch. xxii., sec. 2.



DR. FIELD says: "The baptism of infants is therefore named a *tradition*, because it is not expressly delivered in Scripture that the apostles did baptize infants; nor any express precept there found that they should do so."\*

NEANDER says: "Baptism was administered at first only to *adults*, as men were accustomed to conceive of *baptism* and *faith*, as strictly connected. We have all reason for not deriving infant baptism from apostolic institution."†

OLSHAUSEN says: "We cannot in truth find anywhere a reliable proof-text in favor of infant baptism."‡

HAHN says: "Neither in the Scriptures, nor during the first hundred and fifty years, is a sure example of infant baptism to be found."§

ROBERT BARCLAY says: "As to the baptism

\* On the Church, p. 375.

† Ch. Hist., vol. i., p. 311. Torrey's Trans. Also, Plant. and Train., vol. i., p 222.

‡ Comment. Acts xv. 14, 15.

§ Theology, p. 556.

of infants, it is a mere human tradition, for which neither precept nor practice is to be found in all the Scriptures."\*

WILLIAM PENN says: there is "not one text of Scripture to prove that sprinkling in the face was the water baptism, or that children were the subjects of water baptism in the first times."†

PROF. LANGE says: "All attempts to make out infant baptism from the New Testament fail. It is totally opposed to the spirit of the apostolic age, and to the fundamental principles of the New Testament."‡

HAGENBACH says: "The passages from Scripture cited in favor of infant baptism as a usage of the primitive church, are doubtful, and prove nothing."§

PROF. JACOBI says: "Infant baptism was

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\* Apology, Propo. 12.

† Def. of Gospel Truths, p. 82.

‡ Inf. Bap., p. 101. Dunc. Hist. Bap., p. 224.

|| Hist. Doct., pp. 190-193.



established neither by Christ nor by the apostles."\*

DR. HANNA says: "Scripture knows nothing of the baptism of infants."†

A great number more from the ranks of Pedobaptist scholars and divines have borne similar testimony, which could be cited to the same effect. But, on this specific point, let these suffice.

#### RISE OF INFANT BAPTISM.

If the baptism of children was not appointed by Christ, nor practiced by his apostles, what was its origin, and when did it come into use?

TERTULLIAN is the first who mentions the custom, and he earnestly opposes it.‡ This

\* Art. Bap., Kitto's Cycl. Bib. Lit.

† North Brit. Review, Aug. 1852.

‡ Neander supposes that the much disputed passage of Irenæus has reference to this usage—a little earlier than Tertullian's mention of it. Nean. Ch. Hist., vol. i., p. 311.

was at the close of the second century, or about A.D. 200. His opposition to it proves two things. *First*, that it was in occasional use at least; and *second*, that it was of recent origin. For it must have been in use to be mentioned at all; and if it had long been in use, it would have been earlier alluded to.

BINGHAM could find no earlier allusion to it than this of Tertullian, though he believed it to have previously existed. Had there been any earlier historic record, he would have found it. It must, therefore, as is generally agreed, have arisen about the beginning of the third century.

VENEMA says: "Nothing can be affirmed with certainty concerning the custom of the church before Tertullian; seeing there is not anywhere in more ancient writers, that I know of, undoubted mention of infant baptism."\*

CURCELLAEUS says: "The baptism of infants in the *two first* centuries after Christ, was altogether unknown; but in the *third* and

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\* Eccl. Hist., vol. iii., ch. ii., secs. 108, 109.

*fourth*, was allowed by some few. In the *fifth* and following ages it was generally received.”\*

HIPPOLYTUS, bishop of Pontus, writing in the first half of the *third* century, bears this testimony: “We in our days never defended the baptism of children, which in our day had only begun to be practiced in some regions.”†

BUNSEN, the learned translator of Hippolytus, declares that infant baptism in the modern sense, “was utterly unknown to the early church, not only down to the end of the second, but indeed to the middle of the *third* century.”‡

SALMASIUS says: “In the *two first* centuries no one was baptized, except, being instructed in the faith and acquainted with the doctrines

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\* Inst. Christ. Relig., B. 1, ch. xii.

† Hippolytus and his Age, vol. i., p. 184. See Duncan's Hist. Bap., p. 115.—Curtis' Prog. Bap. Principles, p. 101.

‡ Hipp. and his Age, vol. iii., p. 180. See Curtis' Prog. Bap. Prin., p. 101.

of Christ, he was able to profess himself a believer."\*

CURCELLAEUS says: "The custom of baptizing infants did not begin till the *third* age after Christ was born. In the former ages no trace of it appears, and it was introduced without the command of Christ."†

Such testimony is quite conclusive. Infant baptism was unknown in the churches until the first part of the *third* century after Christ. Had it existed before, some trace of, or allusion to it, would have been discovered. But the most labored and learned research has failed to make any such discovery.

It should be added that when the baptism of children did begin to be practiced, it was not the baptism of unconscious infants at all; but, as *Bunsen* declares, of "little growing children, from six to ten years old." He declares that *Tertullian*, in his opposition to in-

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\* Hist. Bap. Suiceri Thesaur, vol. ii., p. 1136.

† Dissert. de Pecc. Orig. Dis. 2, sec. 56.

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fant baptism, does not say one word of newborn infants." *Cyprian*, an African bishop, at the close of the third century, urged the baptism of infants proper, because of the regenerating efficacy of the ordinance. He and his associates were the first to take this ground.\*

#### FROM WHAT CAUSE DID IT RISE?

From what cause did infant baptism rise? That question is not difficult to answer.

It is well known that at a very early period the notion began to prevail, that the ordinances possessed some special virtue. It was believed that baptism had a sanctifying, saving power; that in it sins were washed away, and the soul by it was fitted for heaven. Thus the sick were thought to be prepared for death, and salvation secured, or made more certain, by its efficacy. Anxious parents, therefore, desired their dying children to receive baptism,

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\* Hippol. and his Age, vol. iii., pp. 192-5. See Curtis' Prog. Bap. Prin., p. 125.



to secure them against the perils of perdition. Such was the error of a superstitious age. Hence arose infant baptism, as one of the many perversions which early corrupted the doctrines and ordinances of Christianity.

VITRINGA says: "The ancient church, from the highest antiquity, after the apostolic times, appears generally to have thought, that baptism is absolutely necessary for all that would be saved by the grace of Jesus Christ. It was, therefore, customary in the ancient church, if infants were greatly afflicted, and in danger of death, or if parents were affected with a singular concern about the salvation of their children, to present their infants or children in their minority to the bishop to be baptized."\*

SALMASIUS says: "An opinion prevailed that no one could be saved without being baptized; and for that reason the custom arose of baptizing infants."†

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\* *Observ. Sacr.*, vol. i., B. 2., ch. iv., sec. 9.

† *Epist. Jus. Pac.* See Booth's *Pedobap. Ex.*, ch. iii., sec. 3.

VENEMA says: "The ancients connected a regenerating power and a communication of the Spirit with baptism." This writer asserts that the early Fathers believed baptism to possess a saving efficacy, and cites Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clemens, Tertullian, and Cyprian, as of that opinion; the last named of whom has been called the inventor of infant baptism.\*

CHRYSOSTOM, writing about A.D. 398, as cited by *Suicerus*, says: "It is impossible without baptism to obtain the kingdom. It is impossible to be saved without it." And as cited by *Wall*, he says: "If sudden death seize us before we are baptized, though we have a thousand good qualities, there is nothing to be expected but hell."†

WADDINGTON, in his Church History, declares touching the opinions of the *third* century: "The original simplicity of the office of

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\* Eccl. Hist., vol. iv., p. 3, secs. 2, 3, 4. See Booth's *Pedo. Ex.*

† *Suicer. Thesau. Eccl.*, vol. i., p. 3.



baptism had already undergone some corruption. The symbol had been gradually exalted at the expense of the thing signified ; and the spirit of the ceremony was beginning to be lost in the form. Hence a belief was gaining ground among the converts, and was inculcated among the heathen, that the act of baptism gave remission of all sins committed previously.”\*

Thus we discern plainly *why*, as well as *when*, this custom arose. An invention of men, based on a perversion of Scripture doctrine, it is now boldly claimed to be an ordinance of God. How can honest and pious men make such a claim ?

We are reminded of the words of the pious Charnock: “The wisdom of God is affronted and invaded by introducing rules and modes of worship different from divine institution.” And we will venture to ask, with the devout Baxter, though both had reference to other subjects ; “What man dare go in a way which

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\* Hist. of the Church, ch. ii., p. 53.



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hath neither precept or example to warrant it, from a way that hath full current of both.”

BAPTISMAL<sup>e</sup> REGENERATION.

We have already seen that the baptism of infants, with that of the sick and the dying, originated in a belief of the saving efficacy of the ordinance. Thus the unscriptural device of infant baptism grew out of the false dogma of baptismal regeneration. A dogma as pernicious as possible, and as repugnant to common sense, as it is to the Bible; but one to which the advocates of pedobaptism have ever clung.

EPISCOPIUS asserts that the Milevitan Council, A.D. 418, declared pedobaptism to be a necessary rite.\*

DR. WALL says: “If we except Tertullian, Vicentius, A.D. 419, is the first man on record that ever said that children might be saved without baptism.”†

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\* Theol. Inst., B. 4, ch. xiv.

† Hist. Inf. Bap., p. 1., ch. xx., p. 232.

HAGENBACH says: "The Church of England taught the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, yet with cautions." He cites Jewel, Jackson, Hooker, Taylor, Pearson, and Waterland, to justify the assertion, which the baptismal service of that church plainly proves.\*

The words of our Saviour, "Verily, verily, I say unto you; except a man be born of *water* and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," were almost universally applied to baptism, and supposed to teach that there was no salvation without it.

WALL declares that, "from Justin Martyr down to St. Austin," this text was so understood. "Neither did I ever see it otherwise applied in any ancient author." And he adds, "I believe Calvin was the first man that ever denied this place to mean baptism."†

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH held to baptismal regeneration, and in the Council of Trent thus declared it: "If any one shall say that bap-

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\* Hist. Doctrines, vol. ii., p. 366.

† Hist. Inf. Bap., p. 2, ch. vi., p. 354.

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tism is not necessary to salvation, let him be accursed.”\*

THE GREEK CHURCH holds the same dogma. *Cybil*, patriarch of Constantinople, declares: “that both original and actual sins, are forgiven to those who are baptized in the manner which our Lord requires in the gospel.”†

STAFFERUS says: they hold the absolute necessity of baptism, and that, “without it, no one can become a real Christian; and that it cannot be omitted in respect to infants without endangering their salvation.”‡

THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES generally have held, and to a degree do still hold, the same unscriptural dogma. *Booth* cites the following Protestant confessions, which embrace it: the confession of Helvetia; that of Bohemia; of Augsburg; of Saxony; of Wittemberg; of

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\* Cat. Coun. Trent, p. 165, 175.

† Confes. ch. Faith, ch. xvi. 1631.

‡ Theol., vol. v., p. 82.



Sueveland; of the Church of England; and of the Westminster Assembly.\*

A large number of Pedobaptist divines and scholars are cited by the same author, as holding this doctrine, including Luther, Gerhardus, Vossius, Deylingius, Fiddes, Whitby, Wilson, Scott, John Wesley, and Matthew Henry.†

Do its advocates and defenders now take the same ground, and make the same claim for the saving efficacy of baptism? If not, on what ground, and for what reason do they maintain and defend the baptism of infants? Have they any reason for it, only that they have been accustomed to it, and taught to believe it right.

#### REASONS FOR INFANT BAPTISM.

1. Some good and honest people verily believe that infant baptism is taught in the Bible. Certainly they have not examined for themselves. A very little effort will show how utterly without foundation is such a supposi-

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\* Pedobap. Ex., ch. iii., Ref. 3.

† Ibid.

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tion, and that neither precept nor example, intimation nor allusion, is found in the New Testament, to authorize or sanction it. Read the *sacred record* through from beginning to end, and nothing of the kind appears.

2. Its antiquity commends it to many. It has been a long while in vogue, and very generally practiced by various branches of the Christian church. We have seen when and why it arose, and how long and how generally it has been in use. But does that prove it right? Is a usage necessarily good and true because it is old? Then we should adopt and practice many absurd superstitions of the early corrupted churches; such as the worship of images, invocation of the saints, prayers to the Virgin, oblations for the dead, consecration of baptismal waters, and many others; not a few of which came into use about the same time as this; and some of which are even older.

Not what is *old*, but what is *true*, should be our rule; not what *antiquity*, but what the *Bible*

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teaches, should we obey. Not tradition, but as Chillingworth declares, "the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants." We should say, as said Basil, "It is a manifest mistake in regard to faith, and a clear evidence of pride, either to reject any of those things which the Scripture contains, or to introduce any thing that is not written in the sacred pages."

3. Others acknowledge that while there is no positive command or authoritative example for infant baptism in the New Testament, yet the general principles on which it rests are there found; the fundamental truths are there taught, from which this custom may be inferred. A strange mode of reasoning. For if we may, by remote deduction and vague inference, originate ceremonies, call them gospel ordinances, and impose them on the consciences of men, then the whole Jewish ceremonial, and the entire ritual service of the Papal Church, may be adopted, and used, and taught, as of divine authority, and binding on believers.

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But what a reflection is this on the wisdom and goodness of God, that he should have left positive institutions, designed for universal observance in his churches, to be vaguely inferred from supposed general principles, rather than to have been plainly and explicitly taught in his word. Such reasoning will not serve in matters of religion. Let this maxim of Tertullian have due weight, especially as applied to religious rites: "The Scripture forbids what it does not mention." And with Ambrose we may ask, "where the Scripture is silent, who shall speak?"

4. Some suppose that the household baptisms mentioned in the New Testament must have included infants, and hence constitute a warrant for baptism. Here again is mere inference, a foundation quite insufficient for positive institutions to rest upon. It is inferred that these households had infant children in them, and that such infant children were baptized; both of which are wholly gratuitous. There are probably few Baptist

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churches in the world, of any considerable standing and history, that have not one or more entire households in their communion, each member of which was baptized on a profession of faith.

The case of Lydia and her household, baptized at Philippi, and mentioned in Acts xvi., is especially relied on. Now observe; Lydia was a merchant woman, "a seller of purple," from "the city of Thyatira," and was at Philippi, about three hundred miles from her home, on business, when she heard Paul preach; was converted, and then "she was baptized, and her household." There is not the least evidence that she had either husband or children. If she had a husband, why was *she* so far from home on business. If she had infant children, they would not likely have been with her, on such a journey, for such an object. Her "household," doubtless, were adults, either members of her family, or persons employed in service such as her business required. The most reckless sophism alone could build



infant baptism on a case like this. A poor cause it must be, that relies for the defence of a permanent religious ordinance, on such evidence.

DR. NEANDER says: "We cannot prove that the apostles ordained infant baptism: from those places where the baptism of a whole family is mentioned, we can draw no such conclusion."\*

PROF. JACOBI says, with reference to these household baptisms: "In none of these instances has it been proved that there were little children among them."†

DR. MEYER, in his Commentary, says: "That the baptism of children was not in use at that time, appears evident from 1 Cor. vii. 14."‡

DR. DE WETTE, in his Exposition, says of Lydia's baptism: "This passage has been adduced in proof of the apostolical authority of

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\* Planting and Training, p. 162, N. Y. ed. 1865.

† Kitto's Bib. Cyclo., Art. Bap.

‡ Comment, Acts xvi. 15.



infant baptism; but there is no proof here that any except adults were baptized.”\*

DR. OLSHAUSEN says: “Baptism ensued in this case, without doubt, merely upon a profession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah. But for that very reason it is highly improbable that her house should be understood as including infant children.”

And he adds: “There is altogether wanting any conclusive proof-text for the baptism of children in the age of the apostles.”†

Most manifestly, all of her household, whoever they were, or whatever their age, *believed*—as she herself did—before they were baptized; of this opinion also were Whitby, Lawson, the Assembly of Divines, and other Pedobaptist authorities.

The case of the Philippian jailer, and his household, mentioned also in Acts xvi., is another often referred to by the advocates of this rite. Now, observe that Paul and Silas

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\* Com. N. T., Acts xvi. 15.

† Com. N. T., Acts xvi. 14, 15. Kendrick's Trans.

being released from their confinement, spake the word of the Lord to the jailer, "and to all that were in his house." Whether adults or infants, the gospel was preached to them. And the jailer "was baptized, he and all his, straightway." Then, "he rejoiced, *believing* in God, with all his house." Observe the jailer's family was baptized; but first, they listened to the word; then they believed in God; and then they rejoiced in their new-found hope. Such a record could never have been made of unconscious infants. Not a word is said of children; there is not even the most remote allusion to them. But the language most conclusively implies that those who were baptized, were those who did believe, and did rejoice. So that, whether the persons were old or young, it must have been believers' baptism.

BLOOMFIELD says: "It is taken for granted that his family became Christians, as well as himself."\*

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\* Com. on Acts xvi. 31.



Such is the faith of Baptists, and such the command of Christ: "Believe and be baptized." Calvin, Doddridge, Henry, and other Pedobaptists, declare that in this case they all believed, and, therefore, they were baptized, and did rejoice.

The household of Stephanas, baptized by Paul, and by him mentioned in 1 Cor. i., is also quoted in support of this baptismal theory. Paul says: "And I baptized also the household of Stephanas." It is inferred here, in like manner, that because a household was baptized, therefore, that household had infants in it, incapable of faith, and they too were baptized. How entirely gratuitous is such an inference, and how utterly without foundation must be a theory based on such an assumption. If there were children, why not somewhere some mention of them? Households are constantly being baptized, and admitted to the fellowship of Baptist churches, but without infant baptism. Doddridge, Guise, Hammond, Macknight, and others, regard this case

as giving no countenance to the custom of baptizing infants.

Of this very family of Stephanas, Paul, in the sixteenth chapter asserts, were "the first fruits of Achaia;" and he adds: "they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." This sounds, not as if said respecting infants, but as describing the Christian activities of adult believers. And such beyond all question were the household of Stephanas.

5. Again, some have claimed that baptism came in the place of circumcision. Hence it is inferred—only inferred—that as all the male Jewish children were circumcised, so all Christian children, both male and female, should be baptized. What the connection is, would require a sage to discover. Reasoning becomes unreliable when facts are perverted, resemblances forced, and unfounded assumptions accepted as arguments to sustain a theory supported neither by facts nor authoritative teachings. Baptism did not come in

place of circumcision, has no connection with it, and no reference whatever to it. For consider these things.

*a.* If baptism, a Christian ordinance, was designed to take the place of circumcision, a Mosaic rite, would not Christ so have stated, or the apostles have mentioned the fact? But they never alluded to any such design.

*b.* Circumcision applied only to males. If baptism takes its place, why are females baptized?

*c.* Circumcision was an external sign of an external union with a national congregation, to secure the separation of the Jewish people from all other nations and races, and their unity as a nation. Baptism is an external sign of an inward and spiritual work of grace, already wrought in the heart; and indicates, not the separation of races, but the unity of the true people of God, of all races as believers in Christ, without distinction of blood or tongue.

*d.* If baptism did take the place of circum-

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cision, evidently the apostles did not know it; else they would have made some mention of it, either in the council at Jerusalem, or in epistles written for the guidance of the churches, or on other occasions, when both these subjects were discussed, and directions given respecting them. But no allusion is anywhere made to any such substitution.

*e.* Jewish Christians did not understand that baptism had taken the place of circumcision; otherwise, they would not have insisted that converts to the Christian faith should receive both these rites. Indeed the whole attempt to found a Christian ordinance on a Jewish ceremony is unreasonable and absurd.

#### OBJECTIONS TO INFANT BAPTISM.

1. Its assumptions are false. It claims to be a gospel ordinance, when it is an invention of men. Christ did not appoint it; the apostles did not practice it; the Scriptures do not



sanction it. This is sufficient reason why it should not be held as a Christian rite.

2. It impugns divine wisdom, and insults the divine authority; because it claims to be needful, or useful in the church, though Christ, by not appointing it when he instituted the church, virtually decided it to be neither needful nor useful. And also by binding this service on the consciences of Christian parents, as of religious obligation, when God has not commanded it, there is an unwarrantable assumption of authority, and a grievous wrong is committed. Divine wisdom knew best what positive institutions to ordain, and what positive commands to lay upon the people.

3. It deprives Christian converts of the pleasure and privilege of believers' baptism. For having received the rite in their unconscious infancy, without their knowledge or consent, when in after years they become regenerate and truly united to Christ, they cannot go forward in the voluntary discharge of



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this duty, and be baptized on a confession of their faith, without discrediting and rejecting their earlier baptism.

4. Because it appears like a solemn mockery, for parents and sponsors, to become sureties for the child about to be baptized, and declare for it, that they believe in God's holy word, and the articles of the Christian faith, as contained in the apostles' creed; that they will renounce the vain pomp of the world, the devil and all his works, with all covetous and sinful desires of the flesh.

5. Because it requires the officiating minister to declare what is false, in the very performance of what should be a most sacred service. He declares what is false when he says: "I baptize thee;" since he *rantizes*, or sprinkles, and does not *baptize* at all. Still more, and if possible more recklessly, when he asserts that in this act the child, "is *regenerate*, and grafted into the body of Christ's church;" and also when in prayer he thanks God, "that it hath pleased thee to regenerate

this infant, with thy Holy Spirit; to receive him for thine own child by adoption; and to incorporate him into thy holy church." This is solemnly declared, when no such thing is done, and when the minister who says it, and all who hear it said, know that no such thing is done:—unless indeed, they do, in their hearts, believe in baptismal regeneration. But the child is not regenerate, nor adopted of God, nor incorporated into the church of Christ by this act. The service falsifies the facts.

6. But, and perhaps worst of all, infant baptism teaches still, to a certain extent, baptismal regeneration; of which false and dangerous dogma this rite was born. It is more than a false statement,—it is a pernicious and destructive error to teach, or allow the notion, that a few drops of water on the face with any form of words, no matter what, can make that child regenerate, a child of God by adoption, and a member of Christ's church. If the child when grown believes all this,—and why



may he not believe it, if thus solemnly taught by parents and minister?—he believes himself a child of God and an heir of heaven, sealed and sanctified by the Spirit, and in the narrow way of life, while blind to the fact that he is still unregenerate, in the gall of bitterness, a child of sin, an heir of wrath, and in the broad road to death. Such perversions,—such blind leadings of the blind,—are too serious, and too sad, to be countenanced by Christian men or Christian churches.

7. Infant baptism, in some sense,—though its advocates are not agreed in what sense,—makes the child a church member, and thus introduces an unsanctified, unregenerate membership into the nominal body of Christ; making that body carnal, instead of keeping it spiritual; thus destroying the distinction which the Founder of the church designed should be maintained between it, and the world. For even if the infant, as such, is not a member, yet when grown to maturity he is admitted to full membership, with no other

demand for, or evidence of, regeneration. The purely spiritual character of the church is thereby destroyed ; and, like other associations, the spiritual and the carnal indifferently make up its communion.

The words of Prof. Lange are weighty, and should be pondered by Protestant defenders of this Papal emanation : " Would the Protestant Church fulfill and attain to its final destiny, the baptism of new-born children must of necessity be abolished. It has sunk down to a mere formality, without any meaning for the child."\*

There may be other objections to this practice, but these are sufficient, it would seem, to deter any candid and conscientious Christian, who takes the Bible for his guide, from giving it any countenance or support.

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\* Hist. Protestantism, p. 34.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER.

**A**NOTHER point of difference between Baptists and other denominations, is their custom with reference to the communion of the Lord's Supper.

Baptists practice what is called a restricted communion, inviting to that ordinance only such as have been baptized, that is, immersed, on a profession of faith in Christ, and are "baptized members in good standing, of regular Baptist churches." While Pedobaptists practice what is called a free communion, and invite persons whom they consider baptized, in whatever way, or connected with whatever churches. And some denominations go farther and hold a really unrestricted communion, to which all, who choose, may come, without condition or limitation.

Who have a right to partake of the Lord's Supper? And what qualifications or conditions are necessary to give them that right, or entitle them to that privilege?

The great majority, on all sides, agree that baptism is prerequisite to the privileges of the Lord's table, and that baptized believers alone are the proper subjects for this ordinance. But what is baptism? That, after all, is the vital question. Pedobaptists hold that persons may be properly baptized by dipping, pouring, or sprinkling, and that either mode qualifies subjects for the Supper. Baptists hold that pouring and sprinkling are not baptism at all, and, therefore, do not qualify for the communion. Consequently such persons are not, by them, invited to the Lord's table.

This custom of the Baptists is called *strict*, or *close* communion, while the usage of Pedobaptists is termed *free*, or *open* communion. Nearly all Baptists in the United States, and a large part of those in Europe, are "strict

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communion ;” while the Catholic, Greek, and the greater part of Protestant Churches, practice “free communion.” Which are right? Which course is most in accordance with the spirit and teaching of the New Testament, the nature and purpose of a Christian church, and the design of the sacred Supper itself?

#### THE FOUR VIEWS.

There are in general four views taken of this subject, as to the proper limits to which the privileges of the communion should extend.

1. Those who believe that for one to be properly qualified to partake of the Supper, he should be regenerated by the Spirit, becoming truly a believer in Christ; that he should be baptized on a profession of his faith—meaning by baptism, immersion, or dipping—and that he should be living in a godly manner as a member of the church. Such persons have a right to the table of the



Lord, and no others have. Of this class are the great body of Baptists in all lands.

2. Those who believe that all persons, baptized in whatever way, by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion—calling these all baptism—have a right, and should be admitted to the Lord's Supper. In general they require a godly life; but whether persons are baptized in infancy on the professed faith of sponsors, or in later years on their own, is immaterial. Of this class are Pedobaptists generally—Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, Lutherans, and others.

3. Those who hold that baptism is not necessary in any form, to precede the communion, or to prepare one for it; and that the church has no right to say who shall, or who shall not partake of the Supper; but every one who desires has the right to enjoy this privilege, without question or condition. Of this class are the Free-will Baptists, so called, a few Pedobaptists, and some smaller bodies.



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4. Those who hold that baptism is prerequisite to the communion, and that nothing but immersion is baptism; but who will so far yield to the honest convictions of individuals, as to admit them to the ordinance on such convictions, rather than on the facts in the case, or the judgment of the church. Thus, if one honestly believe he has been baptized—even though he has not—and that he has a right to the Supper—even though he be mistaken,—yet because he *believes* so, he should be admitted to the ordinance. Of this class are the greater part of open communion Baptists, and, also, immersed members of Pedobaptist churches.

#### THE BAPTIST VIEW.

The following, in general, will express the view of the denomination on this subject:

1. Baptists regard the Lord's Supper as commemorative and symbolical. It commemorates the sufferings of Christ for our redemption, and teaches that, like as the

natural life is supported by bread, so the spiritual life is sustained and nourished only by feeding on Christ as the bread of life. It is not a test or expression of the fellowship of the disciples one with another, except indirectly, but of each one with Christ, his personal Saviour and the Head of the church. It expresses the unity of the faith of those who, together, partake, and the oneness of their trust in him, who, to each alike and to all, has become "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

2. Baptists hold that there are *three* imperative conditions to the privileges of the Lord's Supper:—1. *Regeneration*: being born of the Spirit and made a new creature in Christ. Without this, no one can rightfully be a member of the church, or enjoy any privileges in the household of faith. Without this, one cannot possibly be a member of Christ's spiritual body, and should have no organic connection with his visible church. 2. *Baptism*: being buried with Christ in

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water, on a profession of faith in him. This ordinance must precede the Supper, and is the way and rite of initiation into the visible church. No person, though regenerate and godly, can properly receive the communion without baptism. 3. *Godliness*: an upright, consistent life of Christian virtue, in imitation of the example of the Lord, and in obedience to his commands. For though one may have been truly regenerated and properly baptized, yet, if he be a disorderly walker, violating his covenant obligations, living in sin, and transgressing the precepts of Christ, he has no right at the Lord's table.

3. Baptists claim that the Lord's Supper, strictly speaking, is a church ordinance, to be observed by the church, and in the church. That it cannot properly be administered or partaken of by those out of the church; that members, in their individual capacity, cannot administer and receive it. Nor can the church authorize individuals to administer and receive it. The church must act in its



official character in the administration of it, and individuals be within the church to receive it. Consequently, to reach the communion in a scriptural way, we must be regenerated as the spiritual qualification, and baptized in water as the outward and ritual profession of an inward cleansing, a death to sin, and a rising to newness of life.

4. Baptists claim that they not only may not, but ought not to invite to a participation in the ordinance, any who are not properly qualified for it, as they understand the scriptural qualifications. They believe it is the solemn duty of the church which spreads the Supper, to judge of the qualifications of those who wish to partake, and invite none but regenerate, baptized, and godly persons, to it. To invite, or permit all, without conditions, to receive the communion, is to allow the vile and the profane, the carnal and the impure, triflers with the truth, and contemners of the grace of Christ, to mingle with his spiritual people, and eat and drink in solemn mockery.

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the symbolic flesh and blood of the Son of God. For if the rule be allowed, to this extent will the abuse be sure to go. This would be disloyalty to Christ. He has made his churches custodians of his sacred ordinances; and they, with the most watchful fidelity, should guard them from all profane intrusion and improper use.

5. Baptists are firmly convinced that in order to maintain the purity and spirituality of the churches, it is absolutely necessary to restrict the communion to regenerate and godly persons, baptized on a profession of their faith. To adopt any other rule, or allow any larger liberty, would break down the distinction between the church and the world; would bring in a carnal and unconverted membership, with which to overshadow the spiritual, and control the household of faith; would virtually transfer the communion from the house of God to the temple of Belial. To keep the church pure, the ordinances must be kept pure and unperverted, both as to their

form, and application, the manner in which administered, and the persons to whom administered.

6. Baptists give the following reasons, in justification of their course in the following cases.

*a.* They do not invite Pedobaptists to the communion, simply because they do not regard such persons as baptized; they having been only sprinkled. And even though such persons think themselves baptized, yet their thinking does not make it so. If they desire the Supper, let them submit to baptism, as Christ has commanded.

*b.* They do not accept the invitation of Pedobaptists to commune with them, for the same reason. They believe that such persons, being unbaptized, have no scriptural right to the communion, and therefore to partake with them, would be to encourage an error, and give their presence and influence to uphold a perversion of the order and ordinances of Christ's house.



c. They do not invite immersed members of Pedobaptist churches to the communion, because, though such persons be truly regenerate, and properly baptized, they are walking disorderly as disciples, by remaining in churches which hold and practice serious errors as to both the ordinances. These churches use sprinkling for baptism, and administer the ordinance to infants; both of which are contrary to Scripture, as such persons themselves allow, by demanding immersion for themselves, on a profession of their faith. And yet, by remaining in such churches, they give their countenance and influence to uphold and perpetuate what they acknowledge to be errors, and thus help to impose on others, what they will not accept for themselves. This is not orderly Christian walking; and therefore, very properly, Baptists do not invite them to the Lord's Supper.

## OPEN COMMUNION VIEW.

1. *Sprinkling is not Baptism.*—The first class of open-unionists are those who believe that none but baptized persons should be admitted to the Lord's table, and that the church is the rightful judge of the fitness of candidates. But they assert, that persons sprinkled are scripturally baptized; and, therefore, should be admitted to the Supper. Pedobaptists generally take this ground. They agree with Baptists, that baptism is prerequisite to the communion; but claim that sprinkling is valid baptism.

Pedobaptists, if satisfied with their own baptism, can enjoy their own communion. Baptists do not assume to judge them; but when they claim the right to commune with Baptists, and demand that their sprinkling be recognized as valid baptism, then they ask too much, and what cannot be conscientiously granted. First let them prove their baptism scriptural. The whole question of communion



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with them, really is a question of baptism after all. Let there be an agreement as to the baptismal rite, and the communion controversy will cease.

2. *Baptism is not prerequisite.*—The second class of open-unionists assert that the ordinances sustain no necessary relation to each other; that baptism can claim no priority; and that the Supper is in no vital sense a church ordinance. Consequently baptism is not a condition of, nor prerequisite to, the communion, and unbaptized persons may partake of the Supper. This theory virtually denies the memorial and symbolic character of the ordinance, and holds it as a sign and service of Christian fellowship. Such a course of argument, however plausible, is rejected and condemned by the great body of believers, the world over.

Baptism, as the public declaration of faith in Christ, and the rite by which the disciple is "added to the church," must precede the Supper, which is an ordinance wholly within



the church. Submission to the first ordinance is, therefore, a condition to the privileges of the second; and thus baptism is said to be prerequisite to the communion.

But the open communion Baptists have taken the ground that baptism is not an essential qualification for the communion, and consequently that unbaptized persons could properly partake of the Supper. Wishing to meet their Pedobaptist brethren in a free communion, but still asserting that sprinkling is not baptism, they saw no way of doing it but by declaring baptism non-essential to the communion, and not a condition to the privileges of church fellowship.

Pedobaptists have accepted the conclusions and are willing to meet their Baptist brethren at the Lord's table; but deny the premises, and condemn the reasoning which repudiates their baptism. They say, free communion is right and good, but baptism *is* prerequisite, and sprinkling *is* valid Christian baptism. A privilege offered on such terms they do not

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highly prize, nor care often to accept. Thus free communion Baptists, and free communion Pedobaptists constitute a discordant fellowship; a Christian union without harmony.

That the ordinance of baptism is prerequisite, and admits to the ordinance of the Supper, and the privileges of the church, is manifest from the following considerations :

*a.* Observe the example of our Saviour at the institution of the Supper. Who sat down with him to partake of the paschal meal, and then receive the symbols of his body and blood? Not unbaptized persons, surely. But a small and selected company of his disciples, who had received either John's baptism or his own. For good reasons all baptized disciples were not present; but certainly no unbaptized persons were there.

*b.* The language of our Saviour, used in the great commission, and other similar forms of speech, if not conclusive proof, bears strong evidence in its favor, and is against the supposition that the unbaptized can rightfully

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partake of the communion. His command is, to *teach* all nations, *baptizing* them; his promise is to those who *believe* and are *baptized*. This is the order; teaching, believing, baptizing. Where does the Supper come in? Baptists say, after the teaching, believing, baptizing, and being thus "added to the church." But suppose it comes in before. Then, *where* before? Before the *believing*? Before the *teaching*? Why not? And let the communion be given, as Pedobaptists give baptism, to those who have neither believed, nor been taught, as in the case of infants. Infant communion, as practiced from the third to the ninth century, would be no more unscriptural than infant baptism, as now practiced. Nor would infant communion, after baptism, be more inconsistent, than adult communion without baptism.

The order of the words in the great commission denotes the relation which the acts they express bear to each other. They forbid the supposition that one can lawfully overstep

the commanded ordinance of baptism into the most sacred privileges of the church, any more than he can overstep repentance, or faith into the ordinance of baptism.

c. The New Testament history affords no instance which can be supposed to favor the theory of communion without baptism. But abundant evidence is furnished in facts and circumstances mentioned, to show that all communicants were baptized persons. Apostolic instruction with reference to the supper, and reproofs administered for an abuse of that ordinance, all are addressed to churches, and church members, and suppose that all such were baptized believers.

Those who *believed*, and gladly received the word, were *baptized*; *then* added to the church; *then* they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer.

d. The almost unvarying and universal belief and practice of Christian churches, in all denominations, and in all ages, should be

accepted as important testimony in this case. Both Roman Catholics and Protestants, Baptists and Pedobaptists, with singular unanimity, declare the necessity of baptism as prerequisite to the communion.

JUSTIN MARTYR says: "This food is called by us the Eucharist, of which it is not lawful for any to partake but such as believe the things taught by us to be true, and have been baptized."\*

DR. WALL, who searched the records of antiquity for facts illustrating the history of the ordinances, says: "No church ever gave the communion to any persons before they were baptized. Among all the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained that any person should partake of the communion before he was baptized."†

DR. DODDRIDGE says: "It is certain, that so far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity

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\* Cited by Davidson, on Bap. and Com., p. 247.

† Hist. Inf. Bap., p. 2, ch. ix.

reaches, no unbaptized person received the Lord's Supper."\*

DR. DICK, in his Theology, says: "None have a right to the holy table, but those who have been previously purified by the washing of water, and the word."†

DR. CAVE says: The communicants in the primitive church were those "that had embraced the doctrine of the gospel, and had been baptized into the faith of Christ. For looking upon the Lord's Supper as the highest and most solemn act of religion, they thought they could never take care enough in the dispensing of it."‡

DR. COLEMAN, in his "Christian Antiquities," says of the administration of the Lord's Supper in the early ages: "None, indeed, but believers in full communion with the church were permitted to be present." And again: "But agreeably to all the laws and customs of

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\* Lectures, pp. 511, 512.

† Theol. Lec., 92.

‡ Primit. Christ'y, part 1, ch. xi., p. 333.



the church, baptism constituted membership with the church. All baptized persons were legitimately numbered among the communicants, as members of the church.”\*

BAXTER says: “What man dare go in a way which hath neither precept nor example to warrant it, from a way that hath a full current of both? Yet they that will admit members into the visible church without baptism, do so.”†

BINGHAM, in his able work on the antiquities of the Christian church, says, that preparation for the communion in the ancient times, “was the performance of the conditions and obligations which every man laid upon himself in baptism.” “As soon as a man was baptized, he was immediately communicated;” that is, admitted to the communion. Baptism therefore uniformly preceded the supper.‡

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\* Anc. Christ’y Ex. ch. xxi., sec. 8.

† Plain Scrip. Proof, 24.

‡ Christ. Antiq., B. 15, ch. viii., sec. 1.—B. 12, ch. iv., sec. 9.



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DR. DWIGHT says: "It is an indispensable qualification for this ordinance, that the candidate for communion be a member of the visible church of Christ, in full standing. By this, I intend that he should be a man of piety, that he should have made a public profession of religion, and that he should have been baptized."\*

DR. GRIFFIN says: "I agree with the advocates of close communion in two points. 1. That baptism is the initiatory ordinance which introduces us into the visible church; of course, where there is no baptism, there are no visible churches. 2. That we ought not to commune with those who are not baptized, and of course are not church members, even if we regard them as Christians."†

DR. HIBBARD says: "In one principle, Baptist and Pedobaptist churches agree. They both agree in rejecting from communion

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\* Syst. Theol. Ser., 160, B. 8., ch. iv., sec. 7.

† Letter on Bap., 1829, cited by Curtis on Com., p. 125.

at the table of the Lord, and in denying the rights of church fellowship to all who have not been baptized.”\*

The notion of communion without baptism, is of recent origin, and can neither greatly influence the Christian world, nor long survive. Baptists will, to no considerable extent, accept such inconsistencies, or sacrifice principle for a seeming union; and Pedobaptists will reject a free communion, which disowns their baptism and annuls their church membership.

### 3. THE CHURCH IS TO JUDGE?

The third class of open communionists are those who claim that the right to the Lord's Supper is based on no ground of prescribed conditions, no ritual preparation, but upon each one's own convictions of fitness and duty. The church cannot decide who is fit to come, nor can it rightfully keep any away from the

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\* Chris. Bap., p. 2, p. 174.



communion. But every one who believes himself fit, and wishes to partake, may come and eat and drink in that holy service. Not the judgment of the church, but the conviction of the individual, decides the question.

Baptists hold that it is the right of each church to judge and decide who may, and who may not, come to the ordinances it administers. And still more, that each church is bound by the most sacred considerations of duty and fidelity to Christ, to exclude from it all who in their judgment have not the scriptural qualifications to receive it. It is not the prerogative of the church to make conditions; but to see that the conditions of the gospel are complied with.

Each church must be its own interpreter of truth and duty, so far as its own action is concerned; just as each individual must be the interpreter and judge of his personal obligations. It would be absurd to say that the convictions of an individual must be the authoritative standard by which the body is



bound to act. In such a case the most holy service of the church might be crowded by the vile and profane, invading the sanctity of the household of faith, and making common the affecting memorials of a Saviour's sufferings and death.

If the judgment of the church must yield to the opinions of individuals in one thing, why not in another? If each man who chooses, may come to the Lord's table, without regard to the judgment of the church, then he may also demand baptism, without regard to the judgment of the church. So also if the church is to have no judgment, and the convictions of the individual are to be the rule, any one may take his place in the councils of the body, vote in its meetings of business, demand to be enrolled as one of its members, claim any other privilege, and exercise any other right accorded to its members, since there is none more exclusive, none more sacred, than that of the communion. If that is common, all others may be. But this

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course would completely disorganize and destroy the church as an organic body.

Such a course also would effectually destroy or prevent all discipline in the church. Since, if the body has no right to direct who shall come to its communion, nor to debar or restrain those outside from its privileges, though believed to be unfit; it certainly has no right to control or restrain those inside, though known to be unworthy. Unless indeed the outside world has more privileges in a Christian church than its own members. Thus also a member excluded for heresy, disorderly walking, or immoral conduct, would only be dismissed into a larger liberty; since as a worldly and carnal man he could come to the Lord's table on his own convictions of fitness, when, as a member, he was judged unworthy, and denied the privilege.

No secular society or association but has its regulations. And the body judges of the fitness of persons applying for membership; and also decides when they have violated

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their pledges, and merit exclusion from its fellowship. No one could expect to enjoy the privileges of such a society without becoming a member; nor to become a member on his own convictions of fitness without complying with the prescribed conditions; nor to continue in membership, except as he continued to comply with those conditions. And of all these questions, the body, not the individual, is to be the judge. Much more carefully should the order of God's house be guarded by those to whose trust it has been committed. It would be criminal indifference to his commands to allow the safeguards with which he has surrounded the sanctity of his institutions to be broken down, and those institutions to be profaned.

It is, therefore, both the right and the duty of the church to judge who are suitable subjects for the communion, inviting to it those who are, and debarring from it those who are not. And in this the body does not interfere with the right of private judgment in matters



of personal duty; but denies the right of the individual to dictate to the church; and refuses to substitute personal convictions for the laws of Christ as interpreted by the judgment of the body.

#### PEDOBAPTIST CLOSE COMMUNION.

Pedobaptists are close communion, as well as Baptists; as really so, if not quite as rigidly so. They act on the same principle, of not admitting to the table of the Lord unbaptized persons. Thus do Pedobaptists reject from their communion any and all, unless they believe them to have been baptized. They may be persons of unquestioned faith and godliness; converts of undoubted piety; their nearest kindred and dearest friends; yet they must be baptized before they can take the Supper. Baptists only do the same; apply the rule to them, as they do to others, and refuse to invite them as they refuse to invite others, and for the same reason—because they have not been baptized.

A communion, to be really free and open, must have no restrictions, and no conditions. It must admit any and all who choose to come to it. Its rule must be the personal convictions or wishes of the individual. The moment the church assumes to judge, and imposes conditions on the candidate, that moment it restricts the privilege to a special class, and practices a restricted, or close, communion. This, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, and others do; and then reproach Baptists for doing the same.

There is, therefore, properly, no free communion, but that which imposes no conditions; demands nothing; asks no questions; but spreads the table, and leaves it for all who wish to come. This practice, though condemned by nearly all evangelical Christians, Baptists and Pedobaptists alike, as contrary to Scripture, reason, and authoritative precedent, is consistent with itself;—what can be said of no other form of so-called open communion.





DR. HIBBARD says: "The charge of *close communion* is no more applicable to the Baptists, than to us (Pedobaptists); inasmuch as the question of church fellowship with them is determined by as liberal principles as it is with any other Protestant churches. So far, I mean, as the present subject is concerned; *i. e., it is determined by valid baptism.*"\* This is a candid acknowledgment of the truth in the case.

In one respect, Pedobaptists are more exclusive in their practice of a close communion, than even Baptists; inasmuch as the former exclude from the Lord's table a large class of their own members; viz., *baptized children*. Baptists do not deny the Supper to their own members in good standing. If children are suitable subjects for baptism, it seems most unreasonable to exclude them from the Supper. If they derive advantage from the one, would they not derive equal advantage from the

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\* Chris. Bap., part 2, p. 174.

other? If they can receive the one on the faith of sponsors, why not receive the other in the same way? By denying the communion to baptized children, Pedobaptists act contrary to the traditions of the ancient churches, which they are accustomed to cite with so much assurance, in defence of infant baptism. Do they not know that those ancient churches practiced infant communion, as well as infant baptism? And that for many centuries?

ZWINGLE, as quoted by Bingham, declares that the Helvetian rubric requires, "That a newly baptized child should have the Eucharist in both kinds administered unto him."\*

MALDONATUS asserts that the custom continued in the Roman Church for six centuries; and Bona says, it was not abrogated in France till the twelfth century.†

BINGHAM says: "We might insist upon the known practice and custom in the ancient church, of giving the Eucharist to infants

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\* Chris. Antiq., B. 15, ch. iv., sec. 7.

† Bingham's Chris. Antiq., B. 15, ch. iv., sec. 7.

which continued in the church for several ages. It is frequently mentioned in Cyprian, Austin, Innocentius, and Gennadius—writers from the third to the fifth century. *Maldo-natus* confesses it was in the church for six hundred years; and some of the authorities just now alleged, prove it to have continued two or three ages more.”\*

COLEMAN says: “After the general introduction of infant baptism in the *second* and *third* centuries, the sacrament continued to be administered to all who had been baptized, whether infants or adults. The reason alleged, by Cyprian and others, for this practice, was that age was no impediment. Augustine strongly advocates this practice. The custom of infant communion continued for several centuries. It is mentioned in the third Council of Tours, A.D., 813; and even the Council of Trent, A.D., 1545, only decreed that it should not be considered essential to salvation.

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\* Chris. Antiq., B. 12, ch. 1, sec. 3.



It is still scrupulously observed by the Greek Church.”\*

Such appear to have been the usages through many centuries. And it would seem more consistent for Pedobaptists either to administer the communion to infants, or to abandon their baptism. Since they pretend to repudiate baptismal regeneration, that ordinance can have no significancy or importance, unless it admits its subjects to the Supper, and a full church fellowship.

#### OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

There are several stereotyped objections and attempted arguments, which Pedobaptists are accustomed to urge against strict communion as practiced by Baptists. These are used either in condemnation of the custom which excludes them, or to perplex the minds of those who are inquiring after the truth. Such objections, though they have little real

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\* Anc. Christ’y Ex., ch. xxi., sec. 8. See also Bingham, B. 15, ch. iv., sec. 7.

force, yet being specious, they often greatly perplex the uninstructed.

1. Pedobaptists ask: "Why do you not invite us to your communion? Is it because you do not consider us Christians?"

To this the simple answer is: We do not invite you, because you have not been baptized. And Baptists might retort by asking: "Why do you not receive to your communion unbaptized converts? Is it because you do not think them Christians? If the Lord has received them, why do not you?"

2. Again it is said: "Baptism is not a saving ordinance. Why then make it a test of communion?"

To this they answer: Why do you make it a test of communion, by refusing to commune with any, unless they have been, as you say, baptized? We urge baptism, not because it is *saving*, but because Christ has commanded it. Shall we refuse to obey his command unless it is in something saving? Is that the spirit of our obedience? Shall we stop to

inquire, if some divine injunction be saving, and if we think it so, obey; but if not, disregard it? Baptists do not baptize candidates to save them; but because they are saved already, which in this ordinance they publicly declare. Those who recognize Christ as their law giver, should not presume to question the propriety, or decide as to the importance, of his commands. The duty of the disciple is to *obey*. It is an eye servant who asks whether this or that act of obedience will save him.

3. Or the objection may take this form: "You make too much of baptism; you make it a saving ordinance, by insisting so strenuously on a form, as necessary to the communion."

To this it is replied: We do not make it saving. We simply know it is the command of our divine Master; and as those who wish to obey him in all things, we desire honestly to do so in this. That we do not regard it a saving ordinance, is clear from the fact that we will not administer it to any except those

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who are regenerated, and therefore saved already. You are the ones who make baptism a saving ordinance, by administering it to unconscious babes, incapable of repentance and faith, as if in some mysterious way their salvation became the more certain because of its efficacy.

4. It is thus objected: "We invite you to our communion; why do you not show the same liberal and generous spirit toward us?"

To which Baptists answer: You can well afford to invite us to the Lord's table, because you acknowledged that our baptism is valid and scriptural. But we do not believe your baptism to be scriptural or valid. It is not a question of personal courtesy, but of conscience, and Scripture teaching. We regard you as unbaptized persons. How then can we consistently ask you to partake of the Lord's Supper? Our positions differ greatly.

5. This objection is also urged: "It is the Lord's table. Why then do you exclude any of the Lord's people from it?"



To which Baptists answer: It is the Lord's table. For that very reason we have no discretion in the matter: we have no right to do less or more than he has directed. If it were *our* table, we would then have a right to invite all. It will not do to love our brethren so well that we disobey our Lord for the sake of pleasing them. What the Master has commanded, we must observe and do. Sympathy for the disciple must not obliterate our sense of obligation to our Saviour. At his table, we must abide by his instructions, and not invite guests at our discretion, to the disregard of his regulations.

6. Sometimes it is said: "If the Lord has received us, why should not you?"

To this they reply: Christ has received you into spiritual fellowship: so do we. But Christ has not received you to his visible ordinances. The objection supposes that all whom Christ receives to pardon and justification the church should receive to its communion. If so, then Pedobaptists ought to receive to





the Supper, all converts so soon as they have exercised a saving faith, without waiting for baptism. This is a mistake, as they themselves allow. The Lord receives children dying in unconscious infancy, idiots, the insane, and perhaps many others; but is that a reason why the church should take them to the communion table?

7. This objection is often urged: "We hope to commune in heaven together; ought we not therefore to commune together on earth?"

It is likely that this, with other similar objections, is urged more to find fault with "close communion," so called, than because it has any real reason, or logical force in it. It is based on a misconception of the difference between the earthly and the heavenly states of the church. It supposes that all should be invited to the Lord's Supper here, with whom we hope to commune hereafter. If this be so, then Pedobaptists, as well as Baptists, are committing a grievous error, and as grievous a wrong. For they too re-



fuse to invite many here, with whom they may expect to mingle there. We may hope to meet many from among Papists, heretics, and the heathen in heaven. Many unprofessed and unknown, but true disciples, who never have come into visible fellowship with the saints, are doubtless scattered abroad.

Christ has given his churches laws, regulations, officers, and ordinances, to fit it for its work, and meet the conditions of its earthly state; all of which it should now, in strict obedience, observe, but none of which will be necessary or possible in the future state. The heavenly communion will be a spiritual one, in which even now all true believers do have fellowship.

8. Baptists are often accused of being "bigoted," "unkind," "sectarian," "thinking themselves better than others," "opposed to Christian union," because they practice strict communion.

Pedobaptists, too, practice a restricted communion, and are therefore open to the same

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charge. But why should Baptists be censured for not inviting unbaptized persons to the Lord's table? They honestly believe they ought not to do it. Fidelity to Christ requires this of them. So they believe. If sprinkling be baptism, or if baptism be not prerequisite to the Supper—show it; prove them in error, and they will most cheerfully abandon their position and their practice; prove them mistaken, and none will rejoice so much to know it as themselves.

They have no love nor desire for close communion, on any other account than because it is demanded of them if they would be obedient to their Lord, and consistent with truth and principle. They practice it under great temporal disadvantages; bearing the censures of their brethren on this account. They are misunderstood, misrepresented, reproached, and sometimes abused, because of their course. And yet they are conscientious in it. None endure so much obloquy because of it, and none would be so glad to abandon



it as they, could they see themselves in the wrong.

If they are in error, they need instruction, not censure; if they are right, they deserve approval and co-operation, not abuse. But until they are shown to be mistaken, all unkind reproofs and severe accusations are out of place; they appear very much as if those who make them have a secret conviction that they themselves are in fault, which unpleasant conviction they wish to hide, by assaults upon others.

Let those who love our Lord and Saviour, be kind and generous toward all men; praying evermore for the illumination of the Holy Spirit; diligently searching the Scriptures to know the truth; striving to do the will of God in all things, honestly, as those who must give an account.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CHURCH OFFICERS.

**W**HAT are the officers of a Christian church? How many orders are there in the ministry? These are questions which have greatly divided the Christian world.

Baptists assert that the officers of a Christian church are *pastors* and *deacons*—these only. According to the New Testament there can be no others. In this opinion agree some other denominations, while others still contend that there are three orders, *deacons*, *priests*, and *bishops*. The various Episcopal, or prelatial, sects hold this view. Others add to this number, and the Romish Church carries the list up to ten or twelve, ending with the Pope. The question is one of interest



and importance, as it enters into the organic life of Christianity, and becomes vital to those who cling to the scriptural model of all things in the church.

It is not, therefore, so much what this or that church practices; but what did Christ teach, and how did the inspired apostles construct the churches they founded? If we can ascertain these points, we shall find the object of our search, in the divine plan.

In the New Testament the words *bishop*, pastor, presbyter, elder, are used; all indicate the same office, and therefore officially mean the same thing. They are not unfrequently applied to the same individual. The bishop, called also presbyter, or elder, was the pastor, or overseer, of the spiritual flock, watching and guiding it, as the shepherd does his charge. The deacons were chosen to attend to the temporal interests of the church, as will be seen by the history of their first appointment, in the sixth chapter of the Acts. This was done, in order that the apostles might be

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unburdened by temporal cares, and left to give their whole attention to the spiritual welfare of the people.

The word *deacon* means a "minister," a "servant." It is sometimes applied to the apostles, and even to Christ himself, who "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." While some of the first deacons may have labored in word and doctrine, as well as the apostles, yet their special official work as deacons was to minister in temporal, as the apostles did in spiritual things.

For, thus when the multitude of the disciples was called together, and requested to select "seven men, of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom," to perform temporal service to the needy, it was in order that the apostles, relieved of this care, might "give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." It appears, therefore, that, strictly speaking, deacons, in no official sense, were an order in the ministry



of the word. They were officers in the church, but for temporal service, and not for spiritual ministry; though some of them were successful preachers of the word.

Beside these, there are no other scriptural officers in the Christian church. Clerks, trustees, or others, may be appointed by the body to perform special service; but they are not divinely designated. Pastors, by whatever title they may be known, have the same work and office, and are all of the same grade, dignity, and authority. No one has a precedence of, a pre-eminence over, another. Nor is their rule over the church one of authoritative dictation, but rather of instruction and guidance. In the primitive churches there were no high orders of clergy, placed over other and lower grades, and over the churches themselves, ruling with despotic power. All were equal among themselves, and all equally ministered to the churches.

NEANDER says: "The word *presbyter*, or *elder*, indicated rather the dignity of the



office, since presbyters among the Jews were usually aged and venerable men ; while *bishop*, or *Episcopos*, designated the nature of their work, as overseers, or pastors of the churches. The former title was used by Jewish Christians, as a name familiar in the synagogue, while the latter was chiefly used by the Greek and other Gentile converts, as more familiar and expressive to them." "They were not designed to exercise absolute authority, but to act as presiding officers, and guides of an ecclesiastical republic ; to conduct all things with the co-operation of the communities, as their ministers, and not as their masters."\*

COLEMAN says: "It is generally admitted by Episcopal writers on this subject, that in the New Testament and in the earliest ecclesiastical writers, the terms 'bishops,' 'presbyters,' or 'elders,' are synonymous, and denote one and the same office." "The office of presbyter was undeniably identical

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\* Introd. to Coleman's Primit. Ch., p. 20.—Ch. Hist., vol. i., p. 184.—Plant. and Train., p. 147.

with that of bishop, as has been shown above.”  
“ Only two orders of officers are known in the church until near the close of the *second* century. Those of the first, are styled either *bishops* or *presbyters*; of the second, *deacons*.”\*

This author cites many of the early Christian Fathers who took the same view of the subject, and declared the equality of the primitive ministry, and that two orders only were known in that ministry. Among these fathers are Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Jerome, Chrysostom, Theodoret, and others; authorities extending from A.D. 100, to A.D. 1000.

MOSHEIM says: “ The rulers of the churches were denominated, sometimes *presbyters*, or elders,—a designation borrowed from the Jews, and indicative rather of the wisdom than the age of the persons; and sometimes also *bishops*; for it is most manifest that both

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\* Ancient Christ'y Exemp., ch. viii., sec. 6.—Ch. vi., sec. 5.

terms are promiscuously used in the New Testament, of one and the same class of persons." "In those primitive times each Christian church was composed of the *people*, the *presiding officers*, and the *assistants*, or deacons. These must be the component parts of every society."\*

GIESELER asserts: "The new churches everywhere formed themselves on the model of the mother church at Jerusalem. At the head of each were the elders, (presbyter, bishop,) all officially of equal rank, though in several instances a peculiar authority seems to have been conceded to some one individual, from personal considerations."†

WADDINGTON declares: "It is also true that in the earliest government of the first Christian society, that of Jerusalem, not the elders only, but the 'whole church,' were associated with the apostles; and it is even certain that the terms bishop, and elder, or presbyter, were in

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\* Eccl. Hist., Cent. 1, p. 2, ch. ii., sec. 5, 8.

† Ch. Hist., Period 1, Div. 1, ch. ii., sec. 29.

the first instance, and for a short period, sometimes used synonymously, and indiscriminately applied to the same order in the ministry.”\*

THE PANTALOGIA says: “There is no scriptural difference between bishop and presbyter.” Furthermore, the same competent authority adds: “To this purpose the declaration made of the functions of bishops and priests, signed by more than thirty-seven civilians and divines, among whom were thirteen bishops, Cranmer and others included, affirm that in the New Testament there is no mention of any degrees or distinctions in orders, but only of *deacons*, or ministers, and *priests*, or bishops.”†

ABP. USHER declared: “That bishop and presbyter differed only in degree, and not in order.”‡

BP. BURNETT says: “As for the notion of

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\* Hist. Ch., ch. ii., sec. 2.

† Art. Bishop and Presbyter.

‡ Cited by Coleman, An. Christ’y, ch. viii., sec. 6.

distinct offices of bishop and presbyter, I confess it is not so clear to me.”\*

THE ENCY. BRITANNICA says: “The identity of the office of *bishop* and presbyter, being thus clearly established, it follows that the presbyterate is the highest permanent office in the church, and that every faithful pastor of a flock, is successor to the apostles, in every thing in which they were to have any successors.”†

THE ACTS states that Paul called together the “elders” (presbyters) of the Ephesian church. But in the 28th verse, he names these men “overseers,” (bishops). In this case the terms certainly were applied to the same persons, and were evidently used interchangeably to designate the same office.‡

PAUL and Timothy, in their address to the Philippian Christians specify three classes, and evidently regard these as constituting

\* Vindication Ch. of Scotland, p. 336, cited in Pantalogia, Art. Bishop.

† Arts. Presbyterian.      ‡ Ch. xx., verses 17, 18.

the entire body. They say, "To all the *saints* in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi with the *bishops* and *deacons*." Saints, bishops, and deacons, therefore, constituted the entire membership—the whole church. The pastors are here called bishops, rather than presbyters or elders.\*

TIMOTHY is instructed by Paul as to the qualifications of pastors to be ordained and placed over the churches. These officers are called "bishops." Particular directions are given in this chapter as to "bishops" and "deacons," but no mention is made of elders or presbyters; clearly because they were the same as bishops.†

TITUS is likewise directed by Paul to ordain pastors over the churches in Crete. These pastors he called "elders" in the fifth verse, and "bishops" in the seventh verse. Here bishop and elder must mean the same persons, and indicate the same office.‡

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\* Phil. i. 1.

† Tim. iii. 1.

‡ Titus, ch. i., verses 5, 7.



Two things are, therefore, abundantly evident :

1. That the primitive churches had but two orders of officers ; viz., *pastors*, called bishops, presbyters, or elders, indifferently, whose duties were spiritual, as teachers and rulers of the churches ; and *deacons*, whose duties related to the temporal affairs of the churches.

2. That these pastors, by whatever name called, were equal in office, dignity, and authority among themselves. That no one of them was set over others, as belonging to a higher rank.

During their lifetime, no doubt, the apostles were regarded with a peculiar reverence, as having received their appointment directly from Christ, and having been specially inspired to qualify them for their work. But in all this they had no successors. After their death, such pastors as had been ordained by the apostles would, for that reason, receive special regard from the churches, and the younger clergy. And this special regard

might deepen into reverence so profound as would concede a higher official attitude than that which the common clergy held. This would naturally lead to the recognition of a higher rank and order in the ministry.

Moreover, in process of time, as the first planted churches in the more important cities grew older and stronger, they might easily claim, and have conceded to them, a pre-eminence over the newer and feebler, especially the suburban and rural churches. In like manner, the pastors of the older city churches could, without difficulty, assume a pre-eminence over the pastors of the feebler churches about them. In this way grew up the rule of the metropolitan over the provincial churches, and the authority assumed by the pastors of the former over their brethren in humbler positions, resulting finally in a clerical caste, or higher order of clergy.

GIESELER, in his history of the church, declares that, "After the death of the apostles, and the pupils of the apostles, to whom the



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general direction of the churches had always been conceded, some one among the presbyters of each church was suffered gradually to take the lead in its affairs. In the same irregular way, the title of *bishop* was appropriated to this first presbyter.”\*

Thus matured in process of years that vast, complicated, and despotical system of ecclesiastical life and hierarchical authority, called prelatical, culminating in the oppressive domination of the Greek and Roman churches. The whole prelatical system is oppressive to the people; destructive of spiritual life in the churches, subversive of the ends contemplated by the gospel; calculated to accumulate influence in a few prominent churches, and concentrate power in the hands of a few of the prominent and ambitious clergy, the better to lord it over God’s heritage.

This broad departure from apostolic practice, and from the order and simplicity of the apostolic age, was natural though unscriptural.

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\* Church Hist., Period 1., Div. 1., ch. iii., sec. 32.

tural. Its course of evil progress is easily traced in history, and generally conceded by scholars and divines. Not the less to be regretted, that it was begun soon after the apostles and their immediate successors had ceased to watch over and guide by their wisdom and piety the churches they had planted. Such perversions should not be perpetuated in the kingdom of Christ.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

**B**APTISTS differ from most other denominations, in their view of what constitutes a true scriptural form of government for Christian churches. Here as elsewhere, the question should be, “what does the New Testament teach?”

There are now in use *three* principal forms of ecclesiastical government.

1. The *Prelatical*; where the governing power lies in prelates, or bishops; as in the Romish, Greek, English, and most of the oriental churches.

2. The *Presbyterian*; where the governing power resides in assemblies, sessions, presbyteries, and synods; as in the Scottish Kirk, the Lutheran, and the various Presbyterian churches.

3. The *Independent*; where the governing power resides entirely in the body of the members of each single and separate church; or congregation; as among Baptists, Congregationalists, Independents, and some other small bodies.

Now which of these forms is taught in the New Testament, or best accords with the constitution and government of the apostolic churches?

Baptists hold that a Christian church is a congregation of baptized believers in Christ, worshipping together; associated by mutual covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel. Though the aggregate of the saints, the entire body of the people of God, is sometimes spoken of as "the church," or the church universal; yet, by *churches*, is meant not ecclesiastical societies, or systems of many churches confederated, but single, separate, visible congregations of Christian disciples, definitely organized, with laws, officers, ordinances, discipline, and duties as

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directed by Christ, maintaining his worship, and doing his work.

That such is the New Testament idea of a church seems evident from the mention made of the apostolic churches. There were "the churches throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria." Also, "the church which was in Jerusalem." They "ordained them elders in every church." "The church of God which is at Corinth." "The churches of Galatia;" "the churches of Asia;" "the churches of Macedonia;" "the church of the Laodiceans;" "the church of the Thessalonians;" "the church that is at Babylon." Such are the terms used, in the New Testament, to designate the churches of apostolic times.

A church is "the body," as related to Christ, who is "the head." It is a "spiritual temple," as being composed of regenerate and spiritual members, and distinguished from all secular and unsanctified organizations. In its relation to the maintenance and support of the divine law, and its proclamation and



propagation of the gospel, it is "the pillar and ground of the truth."

Each such separate worshipping congregation, so organized, and so walking, is a Christian church, independent of all others, and having no ecclesiastical connection with any, though maintaining a friendly Christian intercourse with all. It has no power to enact laws, but only to administer those which Christ has given. The government is administered by the body of the members, where no one possesses a pre-eminence, but each enjoys an equality of rights; and in matters of opinion, the majority bears rule. The pastor exercises such control only over the body, as his official and personal influence, together with his single vote, may give him. His rule is in his teaching and guidance in matters of truth and duty, and in his directing and ordering the assemblies, whether for worship or business.

That this view of church structure and government is according to the New Testament, appears evident from a study of the

sacred records themselves. The apostles regarded and treated the churches as independent bodies. Their epistles are directed to the churches as such, and the members are addressed as equals among themselves. The apostles reported their doings to the churches, and enjoined upon them the duty of discipline. They recognized the right of the churches to elect their own officers; a primary and fundamental right, which being conceded supposes all other rights necessary to a self-governing community acting under divinely given laws.

NEANDER, the distinguished historian, says: "The churches were taught to govern themselves." "The brethren chose their own officers from among themselves." "In respect to the election to church offices, the ancient principle was still adhered to, that the consent of the community was necessary to the validity of every such election, and each one was at liberty to offer reasons against it."\*

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\* Introduction to Coleman's *Primit. Christ'y*, p. 19.—*Ch. Hist.*, vol. i., p. 199. *Plant. and Train.*, p. 156.

This is said of the primitive churches and with this view agree the most able scholars and historians.

MOSHEIM declares of the first century: "In those primitive times each Christian church was composed of the *people*, the *presiding officers*, and the *assistants*, or deacons. These must be the component parts of every society. The principal voice was that of the *people*, or of the whole body of Christians." "The assembled people, therefore, elected their own rulers and teachers." Of the second century he adds: "One president, or *bishop*, presided over each church. He was created by the common suffrages of the whole people." "During a great part of this century, all the churches continued to be, as at first, *independent* of each other. Each church was a kind of small independent republic, governing itself by its own laws, enacted, or at least sanctioned, by the people."\*

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\* Eccl. Hist., Cent. 1, Part 1, ch. ii., secs. 5, 6. Cent. 2, ch. ii., secs. 1, 2.



DR. WHATELY says of the primitive churches: "Though there was one Lord, one faith, and one baptism for all of these, yet they were each a distinct independent community on earth, united by the common principles on which they were founded by their mutual agreement, affection, and respect."\*

DR. BURTON says: "Every church had its own spiritual head or bishop, and was independent of every other church, with respect to its own internal regulations and laws."†

DR. BARROW says: "At first every church was settled apart under its own bishops and presbyters, so as independently and separately to manage its own concerns. Each was governed by its own head, and had its own laws."‡

WADDINGTON says, on this subject: "It is also true, that in the earliest government of

\* Kingdom of Christ, pp. 101-156. N. Y. edition.

† Cited by Coleman, Primit. Christ'y, p. 50.

‡ Treatise on Pope's Supremacy, Works, vol. 1. p. 662. Coleman Primit. Ch., p. 50.

the first Christian society, that of Jerusalem, not the elders only, but the whole church, were associated with the apostles; and it is even certain that the terms bishop and elder, or presbyter, were in the first instance, and for a short period, sometimes used synonymously."\*

COLEMAN says: "These churches, wherever formed, became separate and independent bodies, competent to appoint their own officers, and administer their own government, without reference or subordination to any central authority, or foreign power. No fact connected with the history of the primitive churches is more fully established, or more generally conceded."†

GIESELER, speaking of the changes in ecclesiastical order which occurred during the second century, says: "Country churches which had grown up around some city, seem, with their bishops, to have been usually, in a

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\* Hist. of the Ch., p. 41.

† Primit. Christ'y, Exemp., ch. iv., sec. 4. p. 95.

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certain degree, under the authority of the mother church. With this exception, all the churches were alike independent, though some were especially held in honor, on such grounds as their apostolical origin, or the importance of the city in which they were situated.”\*

That the first churches were independent bodies seems, therefore, to be clearly proved. Dr. Barrow, Dr. Burton, Abp. Whately, and not a few other Prelatists of distinction, in addition to those already cited, and the long list of authorities not prelatical, agree in this opinion. In this respect, therefore, the Baptists are clearly founded on the New Testament order of church structure and church life.

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\* Ch. Hist., Period 1, Div. 1, ch. iii., sec. 52.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### BAPTIST HISTORY.

**I**T is sometimes asked: "When and where did the Baptists originate? Who were their founders? What is their history?" These are questions of interest; but a more important one would be: "Are they right? Is their faith according to the teachings of the New Testament?" Many things, which are old, are not true. Creeds and sects may boast a venerable antiquity, while the word of God utterly condemns them. Any organization that cannot reasonably claim Christ for its founder, has small right to the name of a Christian church, no matter how old it may be.

Baptists claim to be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ



himself being the chief corner-stone. If this claim be well founded, whether they have a written history of one century or of twenty matters little. Yet whatever of the past belongs to any, it may be well to know. And Baptist history constitutes one of the most interesting chapters in the records of Christianity.

During the apostolic age even, the doctrines of the gospel became corrupted, and its ordinances soon after. Both Jewish and Gentile converts brought into the churches many of their old religious notions, and incorporated them with the faith of Christ. These, together with the many philosophical ideas of the times, and the perversions to which the truth is always exposed from the ignorance and selfishness of men, very early turned the churches aside from the faith once delivered to the saints. Still there were many who in simplicity and humility maintained the doctrines and customs in their original purity. Those churches which were strongest and

most prosperous, were most exposed to corruption by alliances with the world.

When at length the period of martyrdom and persecution terminated; when a nominal Christianity took possession of a throne, and church and state became united, then religion, in its prevailing forms, lost its simplicity and its power, and a temporal hierarchy took the place of the church of Christ. This was the great apostacy of the early times. But all the churches and disciples did not follow in the wake of this sad departure from the truth. Many congregations and communities of true worshipers, kept the doctrines of the gospel, and practiced its ordinances, nearly, or quite, in their primitive purity. And this they continued to do through all the ages of darkness and corruption that followed. They were never identified with the Roman or Greek churches; they never were in alliance with states; never formed hierarchies. As independent congregations, or small communities, with no other band of union than a common



faith, fellowship, and sympathy, often obscure and unobtrusive, taking the word of God as their guide, they sought to realize the idea, not of a temporal, but a spiritual kingdom in the gospel dispensation.

These religious communities were, by the dominant hierarchies, called *sects*, and stigmatized as heretics. As such they were traduced and persecuted continually. And though they may have had their errors, they were the best and purest defenders of the Christian faith, and the truest representatives of the first disciples of Christ then existing. The state churches were the heretics; while those so called sects were the true successors of the first Christians.

They were defamed and oppressed. Calumniated and martyred, because they bore witness to the truth of God, and testified against the errors and vices of the so-called churches, history has never done them justice, and perhaps never will; because history has been too much written in the interest of their ene-



mies, or from their standing. Tortured and tormented by those who should have been their defenders, crowns and mitres alike pledged to their destruction, they could do nothing but suffer. And this they nobly did, as Christ's faithful witnesses. They were known by various names in different ages, and in different lands, but retained the same general characteristics.

In the *first* and *second* centuries, Messalians, Montanists, Euchites, were terms which distinguished some of these sects.

In the *third*, *fourth*, and *fifth* centuries arose the Novatians. Increasing with exceeding rapidity, they quite overspread the Roman empire, in spite of the cruel and destructive persecutions which they suffered.

In the *fourth* century the Donatists appeared, as a new form of existing sects, or a new phase of the old faith. They multiplied rapidly, spread extensively, and long survived.

In the *seventh* century appeared the Paulicians, attracting much attention, and calling



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down upon themselves the wrath of the Romish church. Still they increased greatly notwithstanding their many persecutions.

That these Christian communities should have been faultless could not be supposed. But they were the best of the ages in which they lived, and maintained the purest forms of gospel truth and practice. Without the advantage of organization and association, they differed somewhat among themselves.

But in general they all professed to take the New Testament as the rule of their faith and practice. They held to a spiritual church membership, and received only regenerated persons to the ordinances. Denying the orthodoxy of the Romish church, they re-baptized persons received from that body, and hence were called *Anabaptists*. Infant baptism they rejected, according to Allix, Mosheim, Robinson, and other historians. Baptism they administered by immersion, as indeed did all Christians during those ages. Robinson calls them "Trinitarian Baptists."

It is said, that the Empress Theodora, after having confiscated their property, caused to be cruelly put to death no less than one hundred thousand Paulicians, for no other fault, or offence, than their religious faith.

About the close of the *tenth* century appeared the Paterines; substantially the same people no doubt as had previously existed under other names. They too rejected infant baptism, and protested against the corruptions of the Romish church; in consequence of which they suffered long and severe persecutions.

In the *eleventh* century, and the ages following, were the Waldenses, Albigenses, Vaudois, Cathari, and Poor Men of Lyons. These were new names, and names usually given by their enemies. They increased, even under their persecutions, to a wonderful extent, and attracted the notice, if not the sympathy of all Europe.

It is not pretended that these ancient sects were known by name as Baptists; but in general they held the more prominent and dis-



tinctive opinions which have always characterized the Baptists. 1. Thus they declared and defended the rights of faith and conscience, and the freedom of worship. 2. They denied the authority of popes, and the right of kings and states to interfere with the people in matters of religion. 3. They rejected infant baptism. 4. They baptized by dipping. 5. They held the Bible to be the only rule and authority in concerns of religious faith and practice. 6. They admitted none to the churches except regenerated and godly persons.

Now it is conceded by all historians of note that such churches and communities did exist, separate from, and persecuted by, the prevailing state churches and civil authorities during all the ages from the apostolic to the reformation.

When the reformation under Luther and his coadjutors broke out, these sects to a great extent fraternized with, and were lost in the multitudes of the reformers. Such as

continued their separate existence, as the Waldenses of Piedmont, yielding to the influence of the reformers, did from sympathy—what the persecutions of the Papists had never been able to compel them to do—abandoned dipping for sprinkling in baptism, adopted infant baptism, and took the general forms of religious life, into which Pedobaptist Protestantism grew.

#### THE WELSH BAPTISTS.

Few denominations have a better claim to antiquity, than the Welsh Baptists. They trace their descent directly from the apostles, and urge in favor of their claim arguments which have never been confuted.

When Austin, the Romish monk and missionary, visited Wales, at the close of the *sixth* century, he found a community of more than two thousand Christians, quietly living in their mountain homes. They were independent of the Romish See, and wholly rejected its authority. Austin labored hard to convert them,—that is, to bring them under the Papal

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yoke ; but entirely failed in the effort. Yielding things in general, he reduced his demand upon them to three particulars. 1. That they should observe Easter in due form, as ordered by the church. 2. That they should give Christendom, or baptism, to their children. 3. That they should preach to the English, the word of God, as directed.\*

These demands of Austin prove that they neither observed the Popish ordinance of Easter, nor baptized their children. They however rejected all his overtures, whereupon he left them with threats of war and wretchedness. Not long after, Wales was invaded by the Saxons, and many of these inoffensive Christians cruelly murdered, as was believed, at the instigation of this bigoted zealot, the exacting Austin.

#### THE DUTCH BAPTISTS.

The Baptists of Holland have a history that

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\* See Benedict's Hist. Bap., p. 343, and authorities there cited.

reaches back to a very remote period, if not to the apostolic age, as some confidently assert. And this antiquity is conceded by historians who have no sympathy with their denominational sentiments.

MOSHEIM, in his church history, says: "The true origin of that sect which acquired the name Anabaptists, is hid in the remote depths of antiquity, and is consequently extremely difficult to be ascertained."\*

ZWINGLE, the Swiss reformer, contemporary with Luther, declares: "The institution of Anabaptism is no novelty, but for *thirteen hundred years* has caused great disturbance in the church."† Thirteen hundred years before his time would have carried it back to within two centuries of the death of Christ.

DR. DERMONT, Chaplain to the king of Holland, and DR. YPEIJ, Professor of theology at Groningen, a few years since received a

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\* Eccl. Hist., vol. iv., p. 427. Mac. Ed. 1811.  
See Introd. Orchard's Hist. Bap., p. 17.

† Introd. Orchard's Hist. Bap., p. 17.

royal commission to prepare a history of the Reformed Dutch Church. That history, prepared under royal sanction, and officially published, contains the following manly and generous testimony to the antiquity and orthodoxy of the Dutch Baptists. "We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and have long in the history of the church received the honor of that origin. On this account, *the Baptists may be considered the only Christian community which has stood since the apostles, and as a Christian society, which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gosyel through all ages.*"\*

MOSHEIM says of the persecutions of this people in the sixteenth century: "Vast numbers of these people, in nearly all the countries of Europe, would rather perish miserably by drowning, hanging, burning, or decapitation,

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\* Hist. Ref. Dutch Ch., Ed. Breda, 1819. See Ency. Relig. Knowledge, Art. Mennonites.

than renounce the opinions they had embraced." And their innocency he vindicates thus: "It is indeed true that many Anabaptists were put to death, not as being bad citizens, or injurious members of civil society, but as being incurable *heretics*, who were condemned by the old canon laws. For the error of *adult baptism* was in that age looked upon as a horrible offence."\* That was their only crime.

This testimony is all the more welcome, because it comes from those who have no ecclesiastical sympathies with Baptists, but who, in fidelity to history, bear honest testimony to the truth which history teaches. The circumstances under which their evidence was produced, give it additional force.

CARD. HOSSIUS, chairman of the council at Trent, says: "If the truth of religion were to be judged of by the readiness and cheerfulness which a man of any sect shows in suffering,

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\* Eecl. Hist., Cent. 16, sec. 3, part 2, ch. iii.  
Fuller's Ch. Hist., B. 4.



then the opinions and persuasions of no sect can be truer or surer, than those of the *Anabaptists*; since there have been none, for these *twelve hundred years past*, that have been more grievously punished."\* Many thousands of the Dutch Baptists, called Anabaptists, and Mennonists, miserably perished by the hands of their cruel persecutors, for no crime but their refusal to conform to established churches.†

#### THE ENGLISH BAPTISTS.

At what time the Baptists appeared in England in definite denominational form, it is impossible to say. But from the *twelfth* to the *seventeenth* century, many of them suffered cruel persecutions, and death by burning, drowning, and beheading, beside many other,

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\* Orchard's Hist. Bap., sec. 12, part 30, p. 364.

† Benedict's Hist. Baptists, ch. iv. Neal's Hist. Puritans, vol. ii., p. 355. Sup. Fuller's Ch. Hist., B. 4.

and sometimes most inhuman tortures. And this they suffered both from Papists and Protestants, condemned by both civil and ecclesiastical tribunals, only because they persisted in worshipping God according to the dictates of their consciences, and because they would not submit their religious faith and worship to the dictates of popes and princes.\* In 1538, royal edicts were issued against them, and several were burnt at the stake in Smithfield.

BRANDE writes that: "In the year 1538, thirty-one Baptists, that fled from England, were put to death at Delft, in Holland; the men were beheaded, and the women were drowned."† What crime had they committed to merit such treatment as this?

BP. LATIMER declares that: "The Baptists

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\* See Histories of Baptists, by Crosby, Ivimey, Danvers, and Benedict.

† Hist. Reformers. See Benedict's Hist. Bap., p. 303. Neal's Hist. Puritans, vol. i., p. 138. Note, vol. ii., p. 355, Sup.

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that were burnt in different parts of the kingdom, went to death intrepidly, and without any fear,"\* during the time of Henry VIII.

Under the rule of the Popish Mary, they suffered perhaps no more than under that of the Protestant Elizabeth. During the reign of the latter, a congregation of Baptists was discovered in London, whereupon several were banished, twenty-seven imprisoned, and two burnt at Smithfield.†

DR. FEATLEY, one of their bitter enemies, wrote of them, in 1633: "This sect, among others, hath so far presumed upon the patience of the state, that it hath held weekly conventicles, re-baptizing hundreds of men and women together in the twilight, in rivulets, and in some arms of the Thames, and elsewhere, dipping them all over head and ears. It hath printed divers pamphlets in defence of their

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\* Lent Sermons. Neal's Hist. Purit., vol. ii., p. 356.

† Wall, cited by Neal, Hist. Puritans, vol. i., p. 137. Vol. ii., p. 358, Sup.

heresy; yea, and challenged some of our preachers to disputation.”\*

BAILEY wrote, in 1639, that: “Under the shadow of independency, they have lifted up their heads, and increased their numbers above all sects in the land. They have *forty-six churches* in and about London. They are a people very fond of religious liberty, and very unwilling to be brought under bondage of the judgment of others.”†

The first book published in the English language on the subject of baptism, was translated from the Dutch, and bears date, 1618. From this time they multiplied rapidly through all parts of the kingdom. The first regularly organized church among them, known as such in England, dates from 1607, and was formed in London by a Mr. Smyth, previously a clergyman of the established church.

In 1689, the Particular Baptists, so called, held a convention in London, in which more

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\* Eng. Bapt. Jubilee Memor., Benedict's Hist. Bapt., p. 304.    † Ibid.

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than one hundred congregations were represented, and which issued a confession of faith, still in use and highly esteemed.

The last Baptist martyr in England was Edward Wightman, of Burton upon Trent, condemned by the Bishop of Coventry, and burnt at Litchfield, April 11, 1612.\*

#### AMERICAN BAPTISTS.

The history of American Baptists runs back a little more than two and a quarter centuries. In this country, as elsewhere, they were cradled amidst persecution, and nurtured by the hatred of their foes. This has been their fortune in every age, and in every land.

ROGER WILLIAMS, a distinguished and an honored name, was identified with the rise of the denomination in America. He has been called their founder, because he organized the first church, and was intimately connected

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\* Eng. Bap. Jubilee Memor., Benedict's Hist. Bap.

with their early history. Williams was born in Wales, 1598, educated at Oxford, England, came to America in 1630, and settled as minister of the Puritan church in Salem, Massachusetts. Not long after, he adopted Baptist views of doctrine and church order, on account of which he was banished by his fellow Puritans, and driven out of Massachusetts, in the depths of a rigorous winter, in a new and inhospitable country. Having wandered far and suffered much, finding the savage Indians more generous and hospitable than his fellow Christians, he finally reached, and fixed his future home at, what is now Providence, R. I. Here, with a few associates of like faith, he founded a new colony, calling both the city and the colony *Providence*, in recognition of the divine guidance and protection, which he had in so remarkable a manner experienced.

In 1639, Mr. Williams received baptism from one of his associates, there being no minister to perform that service. He in turn baptized his associates, and a church was or-



ganized, of which he was chosen pastor. He was also appointed first Governor of Rhode Island. Free toleration was granted in matters of religion. Thus Roger Williams became the first ruler, and Rhode Island the first state, which ever gave entire freedom to every person, to worship God, according to their own choice, without dictation or interference from civil or ecclesiastical authorities.

On account of this unrestricted toleration, many Baptists, as well as other persecuted religionists from other colonies and from Europe, collected in considerable numbers at Providence, and spread through the colony.

It is a mistake to suppose that all the Baptist churches in America grew out of the one which Roger Williams founded. It is even doubtful whether any single church arose as an outgrowth of that. As immigration increased, other churches grew up, having no connection with this; and with considerable rapidity the sentiments of Baptists spread into adjoining colonies, particularly west and south.

For a long time, however, they were sorely persecuted, especially in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

In 1644, the present First Church in Newport, R. I., was organized. But whether the present First Church in Providence was constituted before this date, is still a disputed point. Both claim priority. In 1656, the Second Church, Newport, was formed. Then followed, in order of time, the church in Swansea, Massachusetts, 1663; First, Boston, 1665; North Kingstone, R. I., 1665; Seventh Day Church, Newport, 1671; South Kingstone, R. I., 1680; Kittery, Me, 1682; Middletown, N. J., 1688; Lower Dublin, Pa., 1689; Charleston, S. C., 1690; Philadelphia, Pa., 1698; Welsh Tract, Del., 1701; Groton, Ct., 1705. Others, not mentioned, arose within this period, in these and other Colonies.

With the increase of population, Baptists rapidly increased and widely spread over the country. Edwards' Tables give one hundred and thirty-seven as the number of their



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churches in 1768. According to Asplund's Register, in 1790 they had eight hundred and seventy-two churches; seven hundred and twenty-two ordained, and four hundred and forty-nine unordained ministers; with sixty-four thousand nine hundred and seventy-five church members. According to Benedict's History, in 1812 there were two thousand six hundred and thirty-three churches; two thousand one hundred and forty-two ordained ministers; one hundred and eleven associations; two hundred and four thousand one hundred and eighty-five church members.

Allen's Triennial Register gives, for 1836, three hundred and seventy-two associations; seven thousand two hundred and ninety-nine churches; four thousand and seventy-five ordained, and nine hundred and sixty-six unordained ministers; five hundred and seventeen thousand five hundred and twenty-three church members, including the small denominations of Seventh Day, Six Principle, and Free-Will Baptists. According to the Ameri-

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can Baptist year Book, in 1868, there were of regular Baptists in the United States, six hundred and thirty associations; thirteen thousand three hundred and fifty-five churches; eight thousand five hundred and seventy-four ordained ministers; one million one hundred and nine thousand nine hundred and twenty-six church members; total in America, including the British provinces, six hundred and forty-six associations; thirteen thousand nine hundred and sixteen churches; eight thousand nine hundred and thirty-one ordained ministers; one million one hundred and forty-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-two church members. These figures must be below the facts, since full returns are never reported.

#### OTHER BAPTISTS.

Besides these, there are in America probably not less than two hundred thousand of other, and smaller sects, practicing immersion, not in fellowship with, nor reckoned as a part of, the great Baptist family.



The Seventh Day Baptists, so-called on account of their observing Saturday, or the seventh day of the week, as their Sabbath, on the ground that the Jewish Sabbath was never abrogated. They are estimated at about seven thousand.

The Free Will Baptists, who take their name from their views of the freedom of the human will. They practice open communion. Their number is about fifty-four thousand.

The Six Principle Baptists, thus designated because their doctrinal confession is based on the six points mentioned in Hebrews vi. 1, 2. Estimated at three thousand.

The Anti-Mission Baptists, called also Old Baptists, and Ironsides; found chiefly in the south-west. They do not favor missions, Sunday-schools, or other religious moral reform movements, lest they should seem to interfere with the divine decrees. They are Antinomian in doctrine, and are said to number one hundred and five thousand.

The Campbellites, Disciples, or Reformers,

as they are variously called, a sect that grew up under the leadership of Alexander Campbell, of Virginia, and were at the first chiefly drawn from Baptist ranks. They insist on the absolute necessity of baptism to a full and complete conversion; thus, as they are generally understood, holding substantially to baptismal regeneration. According to their estimate, they number not less than five hundred thousand.

In addition to these there are the members of the Church of God, or Winebrennarians as they are generally called, whose numbers are reported to be from twenty-five to forty thousand; the Tunkers, numbering about twenty thousand; and a number of churches of Brethren whose statistics are not accessible.

#### OTHER FACTS.

*Benevolent Societies.* Baptists in the United States have the American Baptist Missionary Union, organized in 1814, for foreign mission work; Board located in Boston; expenditures

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reported for 1867-8, two hundred and twenty-one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four dollars. American Baptist Publication Society, organized in 1824, for the publication of Baptist literature; Board located in Philadelphia; receipts reported in 1867-8, two hundred and thirty-four thousand four hundred and twelve dollars. American Baptist Home Missionary Society, organized in 1832, for home mission work; Board located in New York; receipts in 1867-8, one hundred and seventy thousand six hundred and sixty-two dollars. American and Foreign Bible Society, organized in 1838, for Bible work, at home and abroad; Board located in New York; receipts in 1867-8, a little more than seventeen thousand three hundred and seventy-three dollars.

The Southern Baptist Convention, during the year 1867-8, received for home and foreign missions, forty-three thousand eight hundred and two dollars.

The American Bible Union received, for

1867, fifty-five thousand one hundred and twenty-seven dollars.

There are some other societies of lesser note, general in their objects; beside many religious and benevolent organizations, for local missionary and charitable purposes.

*Institutions of Learning.* Baptists have, in the United States, *twenty-four* colleges and universities, eleven theological schools, and a large number of smaller institutions of learning.

*Periodicals.* About *forty* periodicals, mostly weekly, are sustained by them at this time.

#### BAPTISTS ELSEWHERE.

In Great Britain there were reported, for 1867, two thousand three hundred and seventy-nine churches; two hundred and thirty-seven thousand eight hundred and forty-eight church members; and in Sunday-schools; nineteen thousand five hundred and eighty teachers, and one hundred and seventy thousand nine hundred and seventy-five scholars. But there are many Baptists, in the British

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Isles not associated, and consequently not reported in these statistics.

American Baptists have also, connected with their mission work in Europe and Asia, six hundred and sixty-five churches, numbering, according to latest reports, forty-one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two members. These are distributed as follows: in Germany, including Poland, Denmark, and Russia, fourteen thousand two hundred and eighteen. In Sweden, six thousand four hundred and eleven; Norway, seven hundred and sixty; Prussia, three hundred and fifty-one; China, three hundred and seventy-two; Bangkok, fifty-four; Nellore, thirty-eight; Burmah, including Assam, nineteen thousand and eighty. These figures are necessarily below the facts.

It is estimated that in the half century since the beginning of the Burman mission, in Burmah and adjacent provinces, there have been not less than eighty thousand conversions, besides other and incidental results

from the mission work. It is also estimated that in the field of the German mission, led by the Rev. J. G. Oncken, during the thirty-three years, or one third century, since 1834, there have been fifty thousand conversions. What are the results of British Baptist mission work in foreign fields, we have not now the means of stating.

#### DOCTRINAL VIEWS.

The Baptist denomination in the United States hold and practice strict communion. In Great Britain, Baptists are about equally divided between strict and free communion. The larger and more influential city churches, and the more popular and publicly known ministers, belong to the free communion party; while those of the rural districts and country towns, more generally practice close communion.

The denomination in America is strictly Calvinistic in doctrine, but avoiding the extremes of Arminianism and Antinomianism; what in England is called "moderate Calvinism." Though diversities of personal opinion





in many cases may incline to either extreme, the "general atonement" view is for the most part adopted, while the "particular atonement" doctrine is held by not a few. The freedom of the human will is declared ; and the sovereignty of divine grace ; with the absolute necessity of the Spirit's work in salvation, are maintained.

In England, Baptists are sharply divided, not only as to the communion question, but also between the general and particular atonement views ; the latter considerably preponderating as to numbers. The mission churches in Europe and Asia are moderately Calvinistic in doctrine, and strict communion in their practice. Baptists are rapidly multiplying throughout the world ; their social influence is steadily and largely increasing ; and the great doctrines of human liberty, and a strict conformity to the word of God, for which they have plead so long and suffered so much, are attracting more earnest attention from thoughtful minds everywhere.

WORKS CONSULTED IN THE PREPARATION  
OF THE FOREGOING PAGES.

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- Booth's Pedobaptism Examined.  
Pengilly's Guide to Scripture Baptism.  
Carson on the Mode and Subjects of Baptism.  
Noel on Christian Baptism.  
Waymarks to Apostolical Baptism.  
Crystal's History of the Mode of Baptism.  
Campbell and Rice's Debate on Baptism.  
Hiscox's Baptist Directory.  
Chase's Design of Baptism.  
Davidson on Baptism and Communion.  
Hayne's Baptist Denomination.  
Bailey's Manual of Baptism.  
Robinson's History of Baptism.  
Benedict's History of the Baptists.  
Orchard's History of the Baptists.  
Duncan's History of the Baptists.  
Curtis's Progress of Baptist Principles.  
Cutting's Historical Vindication.  
Conant's Meaning and Use of Baptizein.



- Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History.  
Neander's History of the Christian Church.  
Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History.  
Gieseler's Church History.  
Waddington's History of the Church.  
Jones's Church History.  
Milner's History of the Church.  
Cave's Primitive Christianity.  
Bingham's Christian Antiquities.  
Neander's Planting and Training of the Churches.  
Hagenbach's History of Doctrine.  
Coleman's Ancient Christianity.  
Neal's History of the Puritans.  
Witsius' Economy of the Covenants.  
Coleman's Primitive Church.  
Barrows on the Sacraments.
- Adam Clark's Commentary.  
Henry's Commentary.  
Whitby's Commentary.  
Gill's Commentary.  
Benson's Commentary.  
Comprehensive Commentary.  
Pool's Annotations.  
Diodati's Annotations.  
Doddridge's Family Expositor.  
Olshausen on the New Testament.  
Beza's New Testament.  
Townsend's New Testament.  
Bengel on the New Testament.

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- Hammond on the New Testament.  
Bloomfield's Greek New Testament.  
Campbell's Four Gospels.  
Ripley on the Gospels.  
Trollope's *Analecta*, New Testament.  
Hackett on the Acts.  
Macknight on the Epistles.  
Conant's Revision of Matthew.
- Encyclopedia Britannica.  
Pantalogia; Dict. Art. Sci. and Lit.  
Brande's Dict. Sci. Art. and Lit.  
Broughton's Historical Dictionary.  
Wilson's Christian Dictionary.  
Kitto's Cyclopedia Bib. Literature.  
Calmet's Bible Dictionary.  
Cyclopedia Relig. Knowledge.  
Smith's Bible Dictionary.  
Treasury of Bible Knowledge.  
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